



HANS PRINZHORN

# ARTISTRY OF THE MENTALLY ILL

Translated By

Eric von Brockdorff

Artistry of the  
Mentally Ill



Case 244

**Fig. 167.** The Avenging Angel (Crayon).

24 × 40 cm.

# Artistry of the Mentally Ill

A Contribution to the Psychology and Psychopathology of Configuration

Hans Prinzhorn

Translated by Eric von Brockdorff from the Second German Edition

With an Introduction by James L. Foy



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With 187 illustrations in the text and on 20 plates, some of which are in color,  
principally from the art collection of the Heidelberg Psychiatric Clinic

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## *Preface to the Reprint of 1968*

Hans Prinzhorn's book, *Bildneri der Geisteskranken*, published in 1922 by Verlag Julius Springer, Berlin, and reprinted in 1923, has long been out of print. The decision of the publishers to reprint the book again deserves recognition and gratitude. The book is still of interest in many quarters, not just for psychiatry, art history, and aesthetics, but the whole range of concerns with humanity which we may collectively call anthropology.

Hans Prinzhorn was not able to attend to another reprint himself. He died all too young of typhus at the age of 47, on June 14, 1933. This is perhaps the fitting place for a brief recapitulation of the life of this unusual man who so fascinated his contemporaries.<sup>1</sup>

He was born on June 8, 1886, in Hemer, Westphalia, the son of a paper manufacturer. At first he studied art history in Vienna, earned a degree in this subject, and then studied singing in London. Subsequently he studied medicine, turned to psychiatry, and, after his return from war service, in 1918 became an assistant in the Heidelberg Psychiatric Clinic. The clinic's director, Karl Wilmanns, had persuaded him to enlarge and analyze a small collection of pictures begun by Wilmanns. Prinzhorn collected about 5,000 samples from psychiatric institutions in Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Italy, and Holland. The collection led to this book, which was completed in Heidelberg in 1921. Prinzhorn remained in Heidelberg for only a few years, subsequently worked in the sanatorium "Weisser Hirsch" near Dresden, and later settled down as a psychotherapist in Frankfurt-on-Main. In 1929 he went on a lecture tour in the United States, which was followed by a journey to Mexico to study narcotics. During the following years he devoted himself to writing in Paris, the Black Forest, and Munich. He corresponded with numerous important personalities of the Weimar Republic, and with artists, writers, and philosophers.

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<sup>1</sup> See Rave-Schwank, Maria, "Hans Prinzhorn und die Bildneri der Geisteskranken," *Bildneri der Geisteskranken aus der Prinzhorn Sammlung*, Heidelberg, Galerie Rothe, 1967, Folio 1, p. 7; Broekman, Jan M., "Das Gestalten Geisteskranker und die moderne Kunst," and Rothe, Wolfgang, "Zur Vorgeschichte Prinzhorns," *ibid.*

He considered himself a disciple of Ludwig Klages and promoted Klages's philosophy in his speeches as well as in his writings. At the time of the decline of the Weimar Republic he was also vitally interested in political problems as well as scientific and artistic ones. His scientific writings dealt with the study of character and with psychotherapy. After *Bildnerei der Geisteskranken*, which immediately made him famous, he wrote a book entitled *Bildnerei der Gefangenen* (Artistry of Convicts), published in Berlin by Verlag Juncker in 1926.

The drawings, paintings, and sculptures which Prinzhorn collected and analyzed in Heidelberg are predominantly the products of artistically untrained and unpracticed persons, inmates of asylums – most of whom suffered from schizophrenia – who were driven to compose them only by the onset of mental illness. In contrast to the more recent collections of art by psychotics, the contents of the Prinzhorn collection are not the products of occupational therapy or psychotherapy but are completely spontaneous. Their authors were ill people who lived in the uninspirational, socially isolated atmosphere of closed institutions. The pictures, of which this work reproduces a small selection carefully and representatively made by Prinzhorn, date from 1890 to 1920.

*Before* Prinzhorn, pictures by the mentally ill were more or less considered mere curiosities. They were seldom studied scientifically (Lombroso, 1888) and were never subjected to a thorough and suitable analysis. The pictures by patients who suffered from *dementia praecox* (premature senility, an earlier description of schizophrenia) impressed observers as astonishing and basically inexplicable effusions from the realm of the psychic dead. To Prinzhorn, who in the Heidelberg clinic had adopted the theory of schizophrenia of the Swiss psychiatrist Eugen Bleuler, they were eruptions of a universal human creative urge which counteracts the disease's autistic tendencies toward isolation. He was able to demonstrate surprising parallels between his pictures on the one hand, and those by children, ancient great cultures and primitive ones on the other, but he found that his collection was most closely related to contemporary expressionistic art. He saw great similarities between the schizophrenic outlook as expressed in the pictures of the insane and the decay of the traditional outlook which had given birth to modern expressionistic art. He considered the difference to lie in the fact that the schizophrenic artist has to adapt to the fateful psychotic alienation and transformation of his world, while the nonpsychotic, mentally healthy artist turns away consciously from the familiar reality, from the compulsion of external appearances, in order to meet the decay of the formerly predominant outlook with the autonomous self.

*After* Prinzhorn, others saw symbolism and formal impulses in the pictures of the mentally ill which represent obscure attempts at communication with outside society, as well as simultaneous attempts at self-identification during the ego-dissolving processes of the psychosis (Navratil). Later interpretations of the pictures laid more stress on the patients' biographies, to which Prinzhorn had paid little attention, and thereby provide the foundation for their psychotherapeutic evaluation.

Despite the changes in observational methods and the interpretations of pictures made by the mentally ill, especially schizophrenics, Prinzhorn's book retains its place in the borderland between psychiatry and art, illness and creative expression. Prinzhorn, who consciously excluded all psychoanalytic aspects, was primarily interested in the *formal* principles of configuration manifested by the pictures, for instance the patients' stubborn, luxuriant need for symbolism or their ornamental, repetitive, ordering tendencies. Diagnostic information was only marginally important for him. He was particularly impressed by the indisputable artistic achievements of many of the patients. He knew how to use

his comparative method to make observers and readers aware of these achievements, and he was successful in making us conscious of the mysterious depths from which many schizophrenics draw in becoming artistically productive – of the alien, secretive, unfathomable elements of such psychotic productions. It is remarkable that even now, 45 years after the first appearance of his work, the author's main point is still valid: people differing greatly in personality, age, and occupation continue to be unusually and lastingly touched by these pictures and often feel compelled to ask themselves fundamental cultural and philosophical questions. Prinzhorn satisfied this concern of the cultivated men of his time and of ours who have an interest in art, with a rich, beautifully illustrated, thoughtful, and well constructed as well as fascinating account. His achievement proves to be timeless and we are convinced that this fact alone justifies the reprint of the book – quite apart from its value for psychiatry and the history of psychiatry.

W. von Baeyer

## *Introduction to the English Translation*

It is nearly 50 years since the publication of Hans Prinzhorn's *Bildnerei Der Geisteskranken*, (*Artistry of the Mentally Ill*). When the book first appeared it created a near sensation with its bold announcement that paintings and drawings executed by asylum inmates were to be treated with high seriousness and aesthetic analysis. It made strikingly original comparisons, for that time, between these works and the art objects made by children and so called primitive peoples. However, most shocking to some readers in the early 1920's were the parallels to be seen between the art of mental patients and the revolutionary paintings and graphics that were then being widely exhibited by the artistic *avant-garde* of the day, the German Expressionists. Prinzhorn's book has maintained a kind of timelessness in spite of advances in art scholarship and the relentless assimilation of the new in the gaudy parade of modern art. *Artistry of the Mentally Ill* remains an extraordinary document from the history of psychiatry and aesthetics. In a most sensitive and dignified manner it celebrates the humanity, the resourcefulness, and the creativity of some of our wretched, anguished brothers, whom society is even now too willing to ignore or discard.

"What a real person he is," someone once said of William James and the same salute of praise comes naturally and spontaneously to mind when one reflects on the life and accomplishments of Hans Prinzhorn. Born in 1886 and dead in 1933 at the age of 47, he was an unusually gifted and fascinating man, whose career developed in a ripening and depth that leaves us with a sense of loss at the thought of its too early ending. He was the son of a paper manufacturer in Hemer, Westphalia. Before the age of 25 he had distinguished himself in two areas of study. In Vienna he took a degree in philosophy and art history, and he spent two years in London devoted to the study of music and voice training. His later performances of songs, sung in a lyric baritone, were mainly for friends at private gatherings.

Perhaps it was his study of the philosophy of art that turned the young scholar and performing artist to a new undertaking, understanding the human condition in its suffering and vicissitudes. Hans Prinzhorn embarked on his medical education in his late twenties.

During World War I he was an army surgeon, and it is likely that his early interest in psychiatry took hold during his military service. In 1918 he was appointed assistant in the Heidelberg Psychiatric Clinic.

Karl Wilmanns, the chief psychiatrist at Heidelberg, had started a collection of paintings and drawings by mental patients. He persuaded Prinzhorn to enlarge the collection and undertake a systematic research investigation into all the materials. Several years earlier, Wilmanns was responsible for encouraging and supporting the psychiatrist-philosopher, Karl Jaspers, in the preparation of his important book, *General Psychopathology*. Prinzhorn spent three years amassing over 5,000 pieces of art work from psychiatric institutions in Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Italy, and The Netherlands. These efforts resulted in his first publication, *Artistry of the Mentally Ill*. During the early 1920's he left Heidelberg and worked in Dresden at the Weisser Hirsch sanitarium. Prinzhorn later settled in Frankfurt as a practicing psychotherapist and prolific writer on a variety of psychiatric subjects. In 1926, he published a study related to his first book, *Artistry of Prison Inmates*. Prinzhorn published 13 works during the following seven years.

*Psychotherapy: Its Nature, Assumptions, and Limitations* was published in 1929. It is the only other book of his to have appeared in an English translation (London, 1933) and it is an important and early attempt at a critique and synthesis of the depth psychologies and insights of Freud, Jung, and Adler. Prinzhorn's original contribution in this work was his insistence on the formation and personal development of the psychotherapist himself. Not everyone may be an analyst, a therapeutic endowment is necessary and this includes: (1) a wide certain knowledge of man; (2) an ability to achieve an unhampered self-objectivation; (3) ethical, character, and intelligence traits free from neurotic distortion; (4) leadership with an instinctive vital conviction of direction; and (5) the self-confidence of a free manhood gained with the complete cooperation of the personality. For the author, the great figures of literature, spiritual teachers, and men of affairs have often been more perceptive students of mankind than academic psychologists. Prinzhorn believed that a genuine friend or an empathic analyst can, from the teaching of vital experiences of his own, enter into the living world of another. The most effective therapist for the spiritual ills of mankind is he who has lived richly. The ripening of personality becomes the first quest of the psychotherapist and indeed of his patient, in the last analysis.

Prinzhorn's psychotherapy introduces a startling contemporaneous idea in his life-centered or "biocentric" outlook; a concept he received and embellished from Ludwig Klages, a philosopher who had a lasting influence on his thinking. This biocentrism provides an outlook on man viewed through a new kind of recognition of man's intimate and inescapable kinship with, and dependence upon, the self-regulating animal, vegetable, and inorganic worlds. He returned again to the thoroughly romantic notion that only if man could be like the animals in relation to their surroundings could he have a truly harmonious inner life. This is the now familiar ecological message in Prinzhorn's outlook. Freud disclosed mankind at the mercy of rebellious animal drives, which disrupted elaborate human conventions and controls. The animal in man is held captive by his civilization that breeds discontent. Prinzhorn fixed attention on the fact that these same rebellious animal forces, in the wild animal sheltered by its natural setting or *umwelt*, cooperate to produce a spiritual unity and beauty for which philosophers struggle in vain. In other words, man's closeness to the animal may as often be a source of psychic strength as of neurosis.

Nietzsche wrote: "that wise man and the animal at length meet," but through his *logos* man takes command of language, consciousness of self, abstract thought and reason,

and the power of purposeful choice. It is these specifically human attributes that make it impossible for man to return to that integral, animalistic union with his surroundings, in which his discontent would diminish.

His pre-logical, pre-verbal unconscious, however, constantly strives to regain this old equilibrium. For Prinzhorn, man is torn between two conflicting tendencies: the *self-assertiveness* of his conscious life and aims and the *self-surrender* of his deeper nature to the life-giving forces of nature. Like Carl Gustav Jung, Prinzhorn thought of religious values and attitudes as providing a partial healing of essential human conflicts. Both admit the existence of a widespread drive to sacrifice self in creative effort for some collective ideal, a human impulse in its own right and not reducible to sexuality or inferiority feelings. This summary of some central ideas in his psychotherapy provides a glimpse of Prinzhorn's vitalistic and humanistic conceptions, which were at odds with a great deal of the reductionism, positivism, and behaviorism rampant in the psychologies of his contemporaries.

In 1929, Hans Prinzhorn made his only journey to the United States and David Watson published a moving memoir some years ago of the man and his impact on some American audiences. He attended an International Congress of Psychology at Yale and lectured at Duke University, the University of Wisconsin, Antioch College, and St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Washington, D. C. "Nietzsche and the Twentieth Century" was the subject of one of his lectures. Apparently the anti-positivist persuasion of the visitor from Germany put off some of his listeners, however, he did communicate readily with William MacDougall of Duke and with David Watson at Antioch. It was while attending a social evening in a faculty home at Yellow Springs, Ohio, that his hostess found Prinzhorn leafing through an album of Schubert songs on the piano. He was asked to sing one and then obliged a delighted and overwhelmed group of admirers with a concert of some 50 songs during the remainder of the evening. Watson describes how he was reduced to tears by the magnificence of the artistic experience. This American visit was followed by a journey to Mexico to study narcotic drugs.

Toward the end of his short but creative life Prinzhorn devoted more and more time to literary activity. Zurich, Munich, and Paris constituted his intense circle of interest. He corresponded with the artistic and political personalities of the Weimar Republic. He promoted the teaching of his master Ludwig Klages in books and articles. He wrote poetry, which was printed posthumously. And, as if the range of his talent needed even more scope for expression, he translated Andre Gide's *Les Nourritures Terrestres* and D. H. Lawrence's *The Man Who Died*. Prinzhorn was a singular man: artist, scholar, scientist, teacher; another "man for all seasons."

*Artistry of the Mentally Ill* is marked by the influence of three men: a philosopher, Ludwig Klages; a psychiatrist, Eugen Bleuler; and an art historian, Conrad Fiedler. Since these men are not readily familiar to an English language readership, a short account of each one's influence upon Prinzhorn is explained below.

Ludwig Klages (1872–1956) was both a psychologist and philosopher. His early career was in association with the Stefan George circle of writers and poets. He later founded an influential seminar and center for characterological psychology at the University of Munich. This center was moved to Kilchberg near Zurich in 1919 where Klages remained for the rest of his life and established himself as the principal sponsor in psychology of a vitalist school. His most important work was in formulating a biologicistic theory of human character based upon innate life forms. To this end he explored many neglected pseudo-sciences, especially the study of handwriting, graphology, and other basic forms

of expression. Much under the spell of late romanticism and Nietzsche, he himself had an impact on the psychology of Prinzhorn and Jung, as well as other vitalists like Leo Frobenius and Oswald Spengler. In his later life-philosophy, Klages built an original pan-romantic theory of life and spirit with a strong irrationalistic bias. He proposed a radical and primitive vitalism and anti-spiritualism. In his thought there is a recurrent struggle between life and spirit, between, natural life forces and “unnatural” spirit, source of mind, will and ego. There is in his philosophy a tendency to glorify the irrational, unconscious powers of life, hailing them as the harbingers of wisdom beyond the feeble powers of man’s intellect and will. It was just this eccentric irrationalism that drew the criticism of Max Scheler another German contemporary, who pointed out the fallacies inherent in any life-spirit opposition. Klages’ mode of thought, its content and general effect may have provided – however unintentionally – an intellectual basis for the Nazi *Weltanschauung*.

What struck Prinzhorn most in Klages’ work was the unconscious roots of spontaneous expression, including scribbles, drawings, and other unsolicited artistic configuration. The characterology also appealed to him with its emphasis on a variety of life-spirit ratios, running the entire spectrum from a total repression of spirit (in primitive peoples) to a near total repression of life forces (in the ascetic, religious personality).

Eugen Bleuler (1857–1939) was a Swiss psychiatrist who coined the term schizophrenia. In his important monograph entitled *Dementia Praecox: or the Group of Schizophrenias*, originally published in 1911, Bleuler summarized and described his wide clinical experience, almost a lifetime of work, in his country’s mental hospitals. He was attuned to all currents in the psychiatry of his time, including the early work of Freud and Jung. His book on schizophrenia established a rallying point against the descriptive, academic, pessimistic psychiatry of Kraepelin, which had extraordinary acceptance at the time. Bleuler was most successful in forcing a rethinking by psychiatrists of the fate of the severely disordered individual so frequently placed in the custodial care of a mental institution. He formulated a variety of clinical outcomes for severe psychosis and insisted upon a separation of symptoms into primary or essential manifestations and secondary or accidental manifestations. His formulation of the core symptoms and findings of schizophrenia, with emphasis on disordered thinking and feelings, had lasting influence on Prinzhorn and his contemporaries. In his book, Prinzhorn pays explicit attention to Bleuler’s findings about schizophrenic persons and relates these findings to his schizophrenic artists and their works, as well as their case histories. It would seem that Bleuler’s fundamental distinctions and insights into psychosis are much more relevant to Prinzhorn than Freud’s psychoanalytic theories of motivation and symbolization.

Conrad Fiedler (1841–1895) was an art critic and art historian who spent his scholarly life in Munich in close association with artists of his age. He was an intimate friend of the German painter Hans von Marées. In an age of idealism Fiedler rejected idealist aesthetics, which derived from Kant and Hegel. In his work, especially *On Judging Works of Visual Art* (1876), he insisted upon the experience of art as a product of perceptual knowing, a mental structure in its own right, capable of authentic cognition. His aesthetics are close to the practical and intellectual experiences of his artist friends. Fiedler pursued a phenomenological procedure in art scholarship long before the phenomenologists had arrived on the scene. He also anticipated Gestalt psychology, since perceptual experience already mobilizes the significant contribution of organizing form and configuration. His work had profound influence on several generations of art critics. Prinzhorn acknowledges his appreciation of Fiedler’s ideas early in the book.

## The Book and its Reception

A glance at the analytic table of contents that Prinzhorn wrote for *Artistry of the Mentally Ill* shows that the book was planned with extreme care and precision. The introductory sections put great stress on describing his approach to the pictorial materials and explaining at length the theoretical foundations of his study of expression. The method of describing the material utilizes a phenomenological viewing of composition and form, with primary attention to the expressive impulse itself. It is Prinzhorn's thesis that pictorial creative power is present in every person and that this process of making images is readily apparent in the works of children and the folk art traditions of all peoples. He argues that in some schizophrenic persons this process is given a new lease on creativity, an awakening to fuller imaginative development. His attention as a scientific observer is not so much turned to the interpretation of the content of these drawings and paintings by schizophrenics but to underlying expressive tendencies. The tendencies include: an urge to play, an ornamental urge, a tendency to order and copy, and a need to elaborate meaningful symbols.

It must be understood that the Heidelberg collection with which the author worked consisted of productions by untrained and unpracticed persons, for the most part, who lacked artistic indoctrination. These persons were often long term residents of mental hospitals, confused and frightened people who lived in uninspirational, isolated and isolating institutions. Between the years 1890 and 1920 when these works were made, there was no formal occupational therapy provided for hospitalized mental patients. The patients who made these images were driven to do so by strong inner needs, often in the face of frustrating circumstances. Paper for drawing was rescued from waste baskets. Some drawings were made on the insides of unfolded envelopes or on toilet paper. Prinzhorn remarks about the small sculptures made from bread in evidence at the institutions he visited. The works of the patients were not included in any therapeutically conceived program, certainly no art therapy as we understand it today. One must remember that the works discussed and illustrated in this book are spontaneous in the fullest sense of the word.

Prinzhorn employs a psychological method derived from three main sources: phenomenology, *Gestalt* psychology, and the empathy theory of artistic communication. He seeks the whole that emerges from a drive for expression, plastic-pictorial elements, and whatever minimal external stimulus that is discoverable. The single work is a whole, autonomous image that contains its origins but that stands independently, which is the prerogative of all products of the imagination. Prinzhorn's method is certainly more synthetic than analytic, and he avoids an overexplanatory, reductionistic assault on the object, which afflicts most psychiatric or psychological investigations of art. Currently art historians are recognizing what Prinzhorn was struggling for when he wrote this book. By balancing the psychological and the formally analytical, by adding the social and the cultural, by drawing on myth and remembering how far technique affects a painting or

drawing, we discover the direction in which to move in order to realize the total meaning of the work of art.

In the middle section of the book, Prinzhorn selects and presents the works of ten very different schizophrenic artists. Some clinical history and description of the course of illness and hospitalization of the artist precedes each creative presentation, however, here again the author deliberately excludes psychoanalytic investigations and interpretations. Prinzhorn wishes to show, through his elucidation of formal principles of composition manifest in each example, the powerful impact of the artistic configuration and the evocative presence of individual works. He is most successful when he examines the wood carvings of Karl Brendel, the fantastic religious icons of Peter Moog, and the original expressionism of Franz Pohl.

The final section of *Artistry of the Mentally Ill*, which is devoted to a summary of results and a broad discussion of problems, remains quite fresh five decades after it was written. The questions probed by Prinzhorn are the same questions that have fascinated several generations of psychiatrists and art scholars. Although much has been accomplished in the study of symbolism and its structures over the past 50 years, the creative process, its psychic substrate, and its unique formation or deformation under the influence of schizophrenia remain as puzzling to us today as they were to Prinzhorn. Perhaps this helps to explain why Prinzhorn never did publish the full scale study of artists who became schizophrenic at some time in their lives, a study he promises towards the end of this book.

Upon its first appearance in Germany in 1922 *Artistry of the Mentally Ill* received an enthusiastic reception. Its originality and its remarkable awareness of a totally new realm of artistic creativity found an eager audience well beyond professional psychiatric and medical circles. In her memoirs, Clara Malraux describes the reaction of herself and her husband to their discovery of Prinzhorn's enterprising book. In the years following World War I, Europe was coming to terms with the revolutionary movements of modern art, cubism, and expressionism. Primitive art, which had earlier helped to shype cubism and expressionism, was also widely acknowledged and exhibited. Prinzhorn's schizophrenic masters appeared suddenly on the scene in an atmosphere where the experimental in art found an appreciative audience, at least in intellectual circles. The man in the street felt confirmed in his initial antipathy; modern artists did paint like certified madmen, and here was a qualified psychiatrist saying as much. Upon closer reading, however Prinzhorn was saying that a schizophrenic age required a schizophrenic art, indeed it demanded such an art to mirror its own loss of reality. One assumes that Prinzhorn found himself comfortably on the side of Klee, Pechstein, Kirchner, and other progressive artists of the times against the philistines who saw bad drawing everywhere in modern art.

Favorable and enthusiastic reviews of the book appeared throughout Central Europe. Oskar Pfister, a Swiss psychoanalyst, wrote a lengthy review for Freud's journal, *Imago*. While Pfister was ready with praise and respect for Prinzhorn's achievement, he did express some important reservations. As might be expected he complained that Prinzhorn had handicapped himself withholding a psychoanalytic explanation of unconscious conflict and motivation in his schizophrenic artists. Pfister felt that the author stopped where the most interesting explorations could begin. He also raised the possibility of dream or fantasy as a preliminary to these works, and he objected to the multiplicity of abstract, vague drives, postulated by Prinzhorn to account for the wealth of expression. Pfister saw regression and magical thinking as keys to psychotic art. These ideas were later developed by the psychoanalyst Ernst Kris in a book of his own. Pfister also pointed

out that Prinzhorn did not give a compelling reason as to how inner disorder and chaos are overcome in the orderly configurations and forms produced by schizophrenic artists. How did Van Gogh, for example, transcend his illness? The concept of a creative illness, first presented by Jaspers, has been dealt with by Ellenberger and others.

The paths opened up by Prinzhorn have been followed by others into many sectors, mainly into those problem areas that he anticipated in the final section of his book. Some of these later studies are indicated in the bibliography. Hans Prinzhorn was a true pioneer. This original and absorbing book maintains its value as a guide to a complex and partially unknown territory. Here was a man and dedicated explorer. It is a pleasure to follow the footsteps of such a man.

September 13, 1971

James L. Foy

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## *Foreword*

No one is more conscious of the faults of this work than the author. Therefore some self-criticism should be woven into this foreword.

There are two possible methodologically pure solutions to this book's theme: a descriptive catalog of the pictures couched in the language of natural science and accompanied by a clinical and psychopathological description of the patients, or a completely metaphysically based investigation of the process of pictorial composition. According to the latter, these unusual works, explained psychologically, and the exceptional circumstances on which they are based would be integrated as a playful variation of human expression into a total picture of the ego under the concept of an inborn creative urge, behind which we would then only have to discover a universal need for expression as an instinctive foundation. In brief, such an investigation would remain in the realm of phenomenologically observed existential forms, completely independent of psychiatry and aesthetics. The compromise between these two pure solutions must necessarily be piecemeal and must constantly defend itself against the dangers of fragmentation. We are in danger of being satisfied with pure description, the novelistic expansion of details and questions of principle; pitfalls would be very easy to avoid if we had the use of a clearly outlined method. But the problems of a new, or at least never seriously worked, field defy the methodology of every established subject. The mere collection of material and its description have no intellectual value in themselves. Only one course remained open once we had recognized that we are still incapable of an ideal treatment of this area: in view of the most recently expressed metaphysical values, to refrain for the time being from all specialized or traditional value systems. In not appearing as the defenders of any particular point of view we may earn the applause of everyone or simply provoke sharper criticism. But since we are really not trying to prove or teach anything, it seemed more important to be as objective as possible and to leave no one in doubt about our methodology and philosophy.

No matter how much we avoid making value judgments based on established norms, however, knowledgeable readers will certainly notice that in our often apparently anarch-

istic devotion to the smallest as well as the largest features in the name of the one guiding concept, “configuration” (Gestaltung), we nevertheless expect to establish new norms. The strongest motivation for a description as thorough as ours was perhaps provided by the anticipation of an age which will once again be concerned with standards. These could be protected from doctrinaire narrowness by having to be proved in being applied to these new pictures. If we have to define the crucial criterion of our observational method more precisely, we remind the reader of Count Tolstoy’s concept of art – to assume a basic, universal, human process behind the aesthetic and cultural surface of the configurative process would be entirely consistent with it. That basic process would be essentially the same in the most sovereign drawing by Rembrandt as in the most miserable daubing by a paralytic: both would be expressions of the psyche. Perhaps we have to be completely certain of the aesthetic and cultural approaches to all compositions in order to understand how we can give up ourselves unconditionally, without any judgment, to such extreme contradictions, because the last thing we want is to give a pharisaical or philistine interpretation to the implication that there is no real difference between the two . . .

Heidelberg, October 1921

Dresden-Weisser Hirsch, February 1923

Hans Prinzhorn

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Artistry of the  
Mentally Ill

## Introduction

The public has recently heard a great deal about “mad art,” the “art of the mentally ill,” “pathologic art,” and “art and insanity.” We are not overly happy with these expressions. The word “art” includes a value judgment within its fixed emotional connotations. It sets up a distinction between one class of created objects and another very similar one which is dismissed as “nonart.” The pictorial works with which this study is concerned and the problems they present are not measured according to their merits but instead are viewed psychologically. It therefore seems fitting to retain the significant, if not exactly common, expression “artistry of the mentally ill”<sup>1</sup> for the title and for a subject which has so far been very little known outside of psychiatry. It includes all three-dimensional or surface creations with artistic meaning produced by the mentally ill.

Most of the reports published to date<sup>2</sup> about the works of the insane were intended only for psychiatrists and refer to a relatively few cases of the kind that every psychiatrist sees over a period of years. The studies of Mohr,<sup>3</sup> which are frequently quoted outside

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<sup>1</sup> The revival of the meaningful and beautiful word *Bildneri* (image-making or art) which is hardly used any more, needs no justification. Just the same we should like to help the readers become familiar with this term, which may otherwise startle them. If today we are inclined to understand by it only sculpture, that was indeed the original meaning of *bilden* (to form). Winkelmann mentioned that *bilden* was less applicable to colors, canvass, and brush, although a painter paints a *Bild* (effigy). But the word is used in its larger sense in classical literature by Klopstock, Wieland, Goethe, Schiller, Bürger and others so that Grimm summarizes the definition as follows: “conceptually the general meaning of representation develops out of the artistic forming (*bilden*) of wood or stone. And Sanders (*Wörterbuch der Deutschen Sprache*) has the following brief definitions: “*Bildner* = *ein Bildender* [a picture maker], especially where artistic creation is concerned,” and also “*Bildneri* = the activity and the work of the *Bildner* [picture maker, artist]. The term is especially suitable because of the uniform meaning of most of the variants derived from the same root. We emphasize that no artistic value judgments are implied when we call objects produced by *bildende Kunst* [creative art], *Bildneri*.”

<sup>2</sup> Most of the psychiatric publications are critically reviewed in Prinzhorn, “Das bildnerische Schaffen der Geisteskranken,” *Zeitschrift für die gesamte Neurologie und Psychiatrie* 52: 307–326, 1919. The Italian literature, which was made available to us only later, mostly by the kind cooperation of the authors, contains some good individual studies. We were also able to obtain some works from England and America, but they contained little that was important.

<sup>3</sup> Mohr, “Über Zeichnungen von Geisteskranken und ihre diagnostische Verwertbarkeit,” *Journal für Psychologie und Neurologie*, vol. 8, 1906. The small book by Réja, *L’art chez les fous*, Paris, 1907, is a competent

of the technical literature, are notable for their exploration of more general problems, however. Unfortunately, there has never been a large collection of pictures which would provide, together with rich resources of comparative materials to minimize the danger of generalizing from too few accidentally discovered cases, the opportunity to investigate all kinds of interesting questions. Pictures by patients are probably known in every older mental institution. They have often been the occasion for the founding of small museums, or they have been added to already existing collections exhibiting figurines made from kneaded bread, escape tools, and casts of abnormal body parts; collections, in other words, very much like those which used to be made of curiosities. Some older psychiatrists also own small, private collections, particularly in France. Lombroso<sup>4</sup> probably accumulated the largest such collection of his day. He reports on about 57 pictorially active ill persons – among them, however, many artists. More comprehensive collections had also been established in the institution at Waldau, near Berne, by Morgenthaler (77 cases); in Konradsberg, near Stockholm, by Gadelius; and in London by Hyslop. They were confined, however, to the materials which accidentally happened to be in their own institutions.

The picture collection of the psychiatric clinic in Heidelberg, on the other hand, realizes an often expressed wish of our colleagues: it includes about 5,000 works by about 450 patients from Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Italy, and Holland, and maintains connections with the rest of the world. We do not exaggerate when we insist that this material satisfies all reasonable demands and offers a multitude of suitable objects for the study of every question that might be raised. We intend to increase especially the number of objects from foreign countries. With a few exceptions, those colleagues on whom we called for donations put the common good above their pride of ownership. The exceptions, in their ignorance about their own possessions, can of course hardly feel such pride. The donors have earned our gratitude and that of every visitor and researcher. The cataloging, which provides for formal as well as content approaches, is completed, and copies of case histories for all the more important cases are ready for scientific use. Comparative related materials (pictures by children, primitives, healthy adults, etc.) are accumulating slowly. The collection can easily become the focus of, as well as a solid base for, the study of numerous psychopathological problems which have intrigued psychiatrists, psychologists, and art theoreticians for decades and which have probably been brought to the fore by contemporary developments.<sup>5</sup>

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survey of the whole subject, including poetry, but avoids the psychopathological and art-theoretical problems. Morgenthaler attempted to apply phylogenetic points of view to the mixture of drawing and writing. Schilder went beyond mere description in his study *Wahn und Erkenntnis*, Berlin, 1918, by attempting to use drawings to approach such psychic processes of the insane which closely paralleled primitive modes of thoughts. The decisive stimuli for such comparative studies of course came from Freud, Jung, and their disciples; the studies are not directed at pictorial composition, however, but at the relationships between psychic processes currently important to the study of psychology of individuals and symbolism in myth, fable, rites, and customs. We will return again to this problem area, which we avoid in the book for several reasons, although we touch on it several times (see footnote 31).

<sup>4</sup> Lombroso's collection has gone to the Istituto di Medicina legale of the University of Turin, to whose director, Prof. Carrara, the Heidelberg collection is indebted for donations of publications and photographs.

<sup>5</sup> Prof. Wilmanns, the director of the clinic, with whom the author founded and developed the collection, is also entitled to much credit for the completion of this book. By relieving the author of clinical work and granting him almost unlimited leaves for study he made the extensive trips and research possible which were required. We are no less indebted to our colleagues who did not object to being burdened with extra clinical work for months on end. May they not be too disappointed by the results of their sacrifices. Perhaps it is well to give a brief history of the "Picture Collection of the Heidelberg Psychiatric Clinic." When

We should say only this about the types and origins of our material: it consists almost exclusively of works by inmates of institutions – by men and women whose mental illness is not in doubt. Second, the works are spontaneous and arose out of the patients' own inner needs without any kind of outside inspiration. Third, we are dealing primarily with patients who were untrained in drawing and painting; that is, they had received no instruction except during their school years. To summarize, the collection consists mainly of spontaneously created pictures by untrained mental patients.

We can consider these pictures from quite different points of view. The one closest at hand is the psychiatric, corresponding to the environment. It naturally dominates the earliest studies,<sup>6</sup> which understandably attempt to find diagnostically useful signs in pictures by various patients. Crude characteristics can be found, but anyone unable to make a diagnosis without the drawings will certainly not have an easier time with them, and the percentage of patients who draw is very small. The newer psychiatric texts already contain brief characterizations of the different forms of drawing. They aptly describe the mechanical, realistic copies made by idiots and epileptics, the disorderly, restless, and unclean smears of maniacs, and the clumsy distortions, with a tendency toward the obscene, in the works of paralytics and others. They also emphasize that schizophrenics are the most prolific. The fantasy, absurdity, incoherence, stylization, iteration, etc., in the pictures of schizophrenics force us time and again to consider especially schizophrenic productions as a still unutilized source of psychiatric insight. However, the published studies show that a hurried examination, like that employed to explore the patient himself, will not yield much understanding. We can recognize some symptoms in the pictures as taught by the compendia: stereotypy, for instance, in which the same motif is repeated several times, or contamination or blending, as when an animal body is given a human head or vice versa. One can easily collect many such facts which prove mainly (and

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the author, returning from military service, entered the clinic in the winter of 1918/1919, Prof. Wilmanns had already chosen a few drawings by patients in the clinic and offered them for study. They included several notebooks and sheets which had already been separated from the medical histories for some time and which were kept in the teaching collection where they were arranged by diagnosis and accompanied by handwriting samples. The idea of working on this material had been considered by Prof. Wilmanns several times before. The author, who emphasized during the first conversation in 1917 that he was primarily fascinated by the border area between psychopathology and artistic composition, at first refused the offer on the grounds that the material was too little and too insignificant, but then inquired by letter whether other institutions might not provide enough material to make the work rewarding. Thereupon a form letter was sent to those directors of institutions who were acquainted with the director, which had an immediate and surprisingly good effect, when some of the most beautiful examples were donated. The acquaintances continued to smooth the way. After the author had prevailed in his plan to attack the problem on the broadest possible front, as opposed to the first plan, which called for several researchers to treat individual cases more as individual clinical case studies, he spent most of two years in elucidating the material. As he traveled from asylum to asylum he continued to collect pictures, to solicit interest in lectures and articles, and to raise private funds. The extant material was protected, insofar as the meager funds permitted, by being mounted and framed. The material was thoroughly cataloged according to content and form, and was arranged as well as possible in the small available space. The director was most understanding. The author, however, is solely responsible for defining the problem, especially as it leads from psychiatry to other subjects – in other words, for everything in this book and in the lectures.

This is also the place to express our gratitude to the asylums for the pictures we used, for medical histories, and for information about the patients which often would not have been obtained but for the personal efforts of the institutions' directors and physicians. These institutions are Eickelborn, Lindenhaus-Lemgo, Eglfing, Haar, Weissenau, Rottenmünster, Schussenried, Weinsberg, Tübingen, Tannenhof, Klingenmünster, Wiesloch, Emmendingen, Konstanz-Reichenau, Haina, Kennenburg, Eberswalde, Schwetz, Dösen, Langenhorn, Neufriedenheim, Obersendling, Göttingen, Hubertusburg, Sonnenstein, Strecknitz, Kreuzlingen, Münsterlingen, Herisau, Wil, Waldau, Münsingen, Schaffhausen, Werneck, Erlangen, and Bayreuth.

<sup>6</sup> Simon's first studies in 1876 and 1888 about the drawings of mental patients put the diagnostic point of view first. Mohr also started with it, but greatly expands the problem.

not unexpectedly) that the same symptoms occur in various areas of expression. It should also be possible to investigate clinically whether the patients who tend to be productive also share other traits, as well as whether their productivity depends on changes in mood and, on the other hand, whether it affects moods. Any and every exact clinical observation of a creative patient would be most valuable. Unfortunately very little research has been done so far. It would make heavy demands not only on an observer's patience but even more on his prudence and understanding. Only someone who is master of the subject in all its ramifications would be capable of it.

A comparative psychopathological investigation of various pictures in connection with the psychological case histories of their authors appears to be more rewarding, given the materials now existing. However, in our ignorance about the act of configuration we may do gross injustice to the pictures by schematic testing. We believe, in other words, that even the best psychiatric and psychopathological methods will not protect us from drawing nonsensical conclusions about our heterogeneous material.

Among the points of view outside of psychiatry there are two which can protect us against false conclusions and which are just as relevant as the psychiatric ones. The pictures are attempts at configuration, like "art." We should therefore be able to draw on experiences from the history of art, or rather Gestalt psychology. Furthermore, the surprising resemblance of these pictures to those done by children and primitives has long been noted, obliging us to investigate the similar features and their psychological bases and to establish the differences. We therefore have to be sufficiently trained to make psychological or ethnopsychological comparisons. Finally, it has been repeatedly emphasized that the works of our mental patients are more closely related to the most recent art than to any other. Indeed, the relationship currently excites the interest of the public far more than that of the scientists. Nevertheless, our efforts to prevent the threat of sensational exploitation have encountered full understanding everywhere, so that we must realize how deep the desire for knowledge is within the dominant forces of our time. We do not at all hesitate to admit that we estimate quite highly the practical importance which a thorough exploration of our subject can have if it can hit the right note, an opinion not held by us alone.

Our considerations make it quite clear, however, that a methodical and clear exposition of our material faces extraordinary difficulties and presents many complicated problems. We search in vain for a firm frame of reference in any of the sciences: dogmatic structures would impose themselves on us which would seem too restrictive. Nor are the antitheses of the two applicable subjects very useful: neither the extremes of sick and healthy nor those of art and nonart are clearly distinguishable except dialectically. The observer, if he is completely honest, will find polar contrasts together with countless transitions which he can label accurately, but not without drawing on current cultural conventions whose limitations will perhaps be painfully clear to him.

In this dilemma we choose as a point of reference a central psychological concept which itself closes in on our main problem (artistic configuration and the outlook of the mentally ill), namely that of configuration itself. This concept must be theoretically interpreted as broadly as necessary. This book, in keeping with its subtitle, intends only to explore a borderland as a contribution to a future psychology of configuration. To this end we shall, on the one hand, exhibit the most important typical examples from our collection and, on the other, give an overview of the full range of problems to make orientation easier for future studies. To what extent our conclusions, drawn throughout from well established facts, can be accepted as solutions to problems will depend on

future developments. We take it for granted that correct and clear formulations of questions are often more valuable than correct but murky answers. We therefore prefer to define the problems rather than to reach conclusions ringing with finality, for which the time does not seem ripe. Often ancient insights, forgotten in our own time and newly rediscovered, may give more satisfaction than the gain of "new" knowledge, which is never free of the suspicion of self-deception.

The fact that the mentally ill in general now and then draw, paint, or whittle strangely fascinating works has so far been hardly known outside psychiatric circles. What was known went back principally to Lombroso, who mentions such works in his writings, but the fascinating qualities were submerged in his efforts to prove the pathologic side of genius. His effective writings, easily accessible to the most superficial mind, have given the saying "genius and madness" currency everywhere on earth and have thereby reinforced the popular impression that unfortunately geniuses are more or less insane even if they are universally admired or the authors of classic works, and that one must look for the pathologic characteristics that are somehow inevitably connected with their abilities. That Lombroso often erred in the diagnosis of epilepsy is interesting only to the specialist. At the time epilepsy was somewhat fashionable, as schizophrenia is today, not least of all because of Lombroso's own research. Here we only note the fact that the border between psychiatry and art still shows the aftereffects of the saying "genius and madness."

Whether Lombroso elicited more consent than contradiction is hard to judge. In any case we would have to evaluate the opinions about his work instead of just counting votes, because his message fell on fertile ground with all those to whom artistic production means a troublesome sideshow in the otherwise reasonable development of humanity from the poor, impractical, and superstitious primitive to the rich, purposeful, and hygienic man of the modern age. Most vigorously opposed to this, for psychology not totally harmless, and, in every sense uncritical, generalization were those for whom the spiritual values of artistic creation were so great that through them their authors were in some sense moved beyond the distinctions of "healthy" and "sick." The opponents' repugnance was only increased by the applause Lombroso reaped from their spiritual antipodes.

When it became fashionable to write "pathographies" — medical histories of sorts — of important personalities to supplement their biographies, the rejection by the intellectually leading circles of any kind of mixture of psychiatric and normal psychological observations grew into an easily aroused feeling of hate which was then directed against psychiatry as such. Traces of it can be easily found in literature, but we cannot absolve our discipline of all guilt. When such a bright and cultivated man as Möbius fell into totally pretentious platitudes and quite unconcernedly claimed to see pathologic symptoms begin to appear in Friedrich Nietzsche's work where his own understanding faltered, what is one to expect of people of average intelligence? It is not surprising that in all efforts to measure great personalities according to psychiatric standards one standard is regularly found to be inadequate: the man doing the measuring. It is not the lack of tact alone which makes the attempt so futile but also the apparent struggle between minds. Hardly ever is the mind of the critical investigator superior to the personality he is testing.

Only when productive people are unquestionably mentally ill and their works the subject of lively controversy among experts does the psychiatric investigation of such people have objective value. In such a case, the ability to explain an otherwise irrational trait by reference to a known psychiatric fact can assist in the desired psychological expla-

nation. When a work has become part of the common heritage and the author was definitely mentally ill (Hölderlin, for instance), we can, to be sure, derive facts with psychological value from psychiatric experience. But when a psychiatrist considers himself justified to explain a controversial work by casting the suspicion of mental illness on an author who is unknown to him, then he acts carelessly and stupidly, no matter what his qualifications may be otherwise.

Even if the more recent pathographic investigations are less painful because they stress the theoretical psychopathological aspects rather than the historical and biographical, the sensibilities of a cultivated man will not feel any less violated. To him even the unavoidable and certain fact of mental illness will be only one factor among others and is to be evaluated, like all the others, only by reference to the work. If the work is truly valuable and lives in the minds of others, what does it matter that psychiatrists, a culturally insignificant group, can prove that the author should be publically subjected to diagnosis, even if only after his death? But if the work is worthless and the author healthy – who stands to gain then?

Despite all the complications and the fact that his sensibilities oppose the opinions of the psychiatrists, the cultured man constantly has in mind the problem which was only clouded by Lombroso's saying. When people of the past spoke of the holy madness which seizes the poet during the state of inspiration; when they cultivated ecstasies, induced trances, and called mad men holy; then all these forms of "madness" must have shared something profound. Otherwise we would have to be so presumptuous as to accuse these people of a lack of essential understanding which exact methods might perhaps correct. And when, on the other hand, numerous spiritual conditions which for centuries had been accepted as cultural factors of the highest order are today exposed as sick, then something must be awry at the very outset of this exposure, or at least something of importance must have been lost, no matter how unobjectionable the methods used may be in themselves. Indeed, these disquieting considerations and the more general interest in psychopathologic questions have turned our attention especially toward the old central problem: will a thorough psychological analysis prove these conditions – the artistic, inspirational, creative process on the one hand, and the outlook of the insane on the other – to be somehow related?

In this general formulation the problem does in fact lose much of its painful immediacy because it has been rendered impersonal, and the psychological question about the relationship of two psychic states, which once seemed similar and which are now supposed to be contradictory, is the ultimate direction of our investigation.

Our material itself will be the basis for our discussion; the pictures will not be measured or judged by any fixed, outside standard. Instead, we shall try to comprehend and analyze the pictures visually, as free of prejudice as possible. No matter how hard we shall try to be unprejudiced, however, we are under no illusions about the possibilities of an approach free of all preconceptions. We shall therefore state in a brief theoretical section those psychological postulates which may be considered sound in any observation of pictorial art. As we already indicated, the concept of configuration is central for us, carrying more weight than in most theoretical discussions of art, not for a psychological reason but rather for a metaphysical one: because we conceive of life itself as a hierarchy of formative processes and can hope to reach significant conclusions only by reference to these processes. When we uncover the psychological roots of the creative urge in man we recognize in the need for expression the core of the impulses to configuration, which are nourished, however, by the whole psyche. The configurative tendencies, whose various

combinations determine the character of a picture, develop from this core, but the basic axiom (that all compositions are the expressive gestures of their authors and are apprehensible directly, without the interposition of a purpose or any other rational instance) remains decisive. Although the theory of configurative expression has to date been systematized only in graphology, much depends on our success in making use of all previous findings. Only then will it be possible to recognize mental aberrations in pictures. We can contribute only the barest beginnings. There is very little previous research and the little there is is limited in scope, a fact which is not surprising since rare instinctive abilities and much experience and judgment are required. On top of that, any research not aiming at something that can be measured precisely is simply not fashionable today.

Our brief statement of a theory of configuration is supplemented by a section on "eidetic image and configuration," which we also try to restrict to essentials. We expect that these introductions will lend greater credibility or even acceptance to our efforts to approach every picture without prejudice, without prior questions and, at first, without value judgments. Our attitude always includes a phenomenological component in the largest sense, even if it is not to be applied according to Husserl's strict methods. We are not seeking psychological explanations, after all, but rather a view of what is.

The two main parts hardly need introductions. From our prefatory remarks it follows quite naturally that we shall develop the material according to configurational-psychological points of view and that we shall start, furthermore, with pieces which we can grasp in their entirety. Those in which a relatively few tendencies are presented quite clearly are the simplest. From them we shall move to complicated works, striving always for insights into newly appearing psychic impulses. After we have sketched out, on the basis of scribbles, the two main facets of pictorial configuration, namely the ordering and the copying tendencies, we are introduced to much more significant, problematical, highly symbolic, and strange pictures of the greatest variety. The discussion of the material leads up to the 10 schizophrenic masters, who are most important because we shall then be dealing with pictures whose relationships with their authors are clarified by extensive biographies.

At that point we shall have considered the material from every important psychiatric and art historic point of view, so that the basic discussions of the third part, which follow a summation, utilize especially comparable materials as an aid to clarification, and depend entirely on known and provable facts.

THEORETICAL PART  
THE PSYCHOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS  
OF PICTORIAL CONFIGURATION

## *1. The Metaphysical Meaning of Configuration*

To be consistent with what we said in the Foreword we must confess that we are proceeding from a fiction: the metaphysical meaning of pictorial configuration is assumed to be familiar. In fact it is not known at all, as shown by the efforts of philosophical aesthetics, but is really a creature of subjective opinion. We therefore indicate the directions in which we propose *not* to look: not toward imitation of nature, not toward illusion, not toward the embellishment of an intolerable life, and not toward the possible educational side effects. Every statement of purpose is foreign to the essence of configuration, however justified it may be sociologically in connection with life. Instead we seek the meaning of every created element within the configuration itself. We are not able to define the perfection of a work in words other than these: it is the highest degree of vitality given the most consummate expression. Any other value scale must draw on divergent and culturally supplementary perspectives, which have made the word "art" completely colorless and hardly usable for basic discussions because of its affected and overemphasized connotations. We expect to be able to trace the major characteristics of a work far back into the process of configuration which, reduced to its essential features, will give these major characteristics prominence as clearly defined and describable psychic functions. We also believe that the creative process, stripped of individual traits and of every relation to secondary elements, will allow us to comprehend the metaphysical meaning of configuration, which civilization generally obscures by establishing extraneous ends.

All individual psychological considerations which address themselves to the roots of pictorial configuration are to be viewed in the light of this basic idea. It is important to emphasize those tendencies which work together in the general, but not yet closely defined, creative urge. What weight one assigns to individual tendencies depends on various conditions and primarily on one's own philosophy of life. Also, the effect of various components will be different in each picture. Each can dominate; each can disappear. In our opinion all of the six roots to be described are relevant in each case, which means that one can never derive a complete explanation from any single impulse.

One might object that theoretical considerations would only burden and delay an investigation determined by its materials, but they are extremely important for the evaluation of the material and not so well known that we can simply refer to them. The explanation of frequently described creative tendencies and their arrangement in the "normal" configurative process gives us a foothold for all future evaluations of pictures. Rather than being limited to vague impressions we shall be able to show strange traits within the confines of a configurative tendency; instead of simply pointing out a disturbance we shall be able to show that a psychological function as such is disturbed.

## *II. The Expressive Urge and the Schema of the Tendencies of Configuration*

Piderit, Darwin, Wundt, and later Croce and Kohnstamm have described the many ambiguities of expressive gestures. In general psychiatry it has become common because of Kraepelin to treat the disturbances of the expressive gestures as a unit in themselves. Only Klages, however, founded a complete theory of expression, much of which we accept.<sup>7</sup> According to his theory, expressive gestures have the capability of so realizing psychic elements that they are communicated to us directly, as participants. Any motor discharge can be a carrier of expressive processes, not just voluntary movements, but also physiological reflex manifestations such as blushing. From the purposeful movement of the arm, the gesture provoked by joy or anger, to the "oral gesture" of the word and its manifestation in writing or in a picture, the individual-psychological element is always communicated to us simply and directly, instead of by rational association.

Even though expressive gestures play a role in all vital actions (in Wundt's terms they can occur as side effects of any automatic, instinctive, or voluntary movement) there exists nevertheless only one large facet of life which can be comprehended completely from gestures: the realm of configuration, especially artistic configuration. While for the purpose of cognition an object can be clearly described and conceptualized through measurable qualities, the observational method, the only one that can be called objective, fails as soon as intangible expressive values come into play. One may capture occasional simpler expressive components by means of an apparatus (Kraepelin's scales for measuring writing pressure, for example) but the deeper the phenomenon of expression is anchored within the individual and the higher its rank as a configuration, the less capable does the quantifying and conceptualizing researcher find himself in coming to grips with it. Only a fool will convince himself that he can determine the significant element in the tone of a violinist by measuring vibrations or timbre, or the expressive content of a late picture by Rembrandt, with its deeply glowing colors, by color chart analysis.

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<sup>7</sup> This theory of expression and simultaneously its differentiation from its (except for Piderit) widely diverging predecessors is presented most incisively in the just published second edition of Ludwig Klages, *Ausdrucksbewegung und Gestaltungskraft. Grundlegung der Wissenschaft vom Ausdruck*, Leipzig, 1921. Of course great difficulties stand in the way of a utilization of these important insights in the psychology of creative art, which in part are due to the ambiguity of "expression," in part to its multifaceted blending with the already complicated structure of the configurative process. Although Klages bases his theory primarily on handwriting, which he had also analyzed, and secondarily on language, his excursions into pictorial composition seem to us to be much more enlightening than most theoretical efforts which started with art. We are curious whether the inspirational riches which are hidden in Klages' broadly constructed thoughts will have as anonymous an effect on this subject as his pioneer work in character study.

In contradistinction to the realm of measurable facts we therefore posit the realm of expressive facts, in which psychological elements appear directly and are apprehended equally directly, without the interposition of any intellectual apparatus. Furthermore, all expressive gestures as such are subordinated to one purpose: to actualize the psyche and thereby to build a bridge from the self to others. That they do this freely and completely clearly gives them their value. It must be added that the gestures must in fact be composed of the psychic elements whose expression they are, and also that they must be as concrete and unambiguous as possible. The tendency within all conscious expressiveness to achieve formal perfection contains these two requirements. We can discover its beginnings in very simple circumstances: a child may invent a lively dance in the course of play or develop doodles on a slate whose significance can perhaps be explained by a qualified expert;<sup>8</sup> a primitive in his ritual mask may somehow express an outlook filled with magic and demonic preconceptions. There are countless other processes in which the psychic forces achieve concrete form. If we do not want to limit ourselves to enumerating and describing the visible manifestations of such expressive processes but instead wish to investigate psychologically the processes themselves, we must be able to identify the motivation, not to say the potency, which appears in them. In other words, we speak of a tendency, a compulsion, a need for the expression of the psyche, and thereby denote those compulsive vital processes which are not subordinated to any outside purpose but directed solely and self-sufficiently toward their own realization.

We cannot attempt here to justify our opinion theoretically even in outline, and therefore prefer simply to posit these statements as a central point of reference for all the investigations of this book. Our conception of the nature of configuration is based mainly on Klages'. An exposition which would do justice to the many very involved facts of artistic configuration in this sense does not yet exist, but recently our methodology has become increasingly attractive.

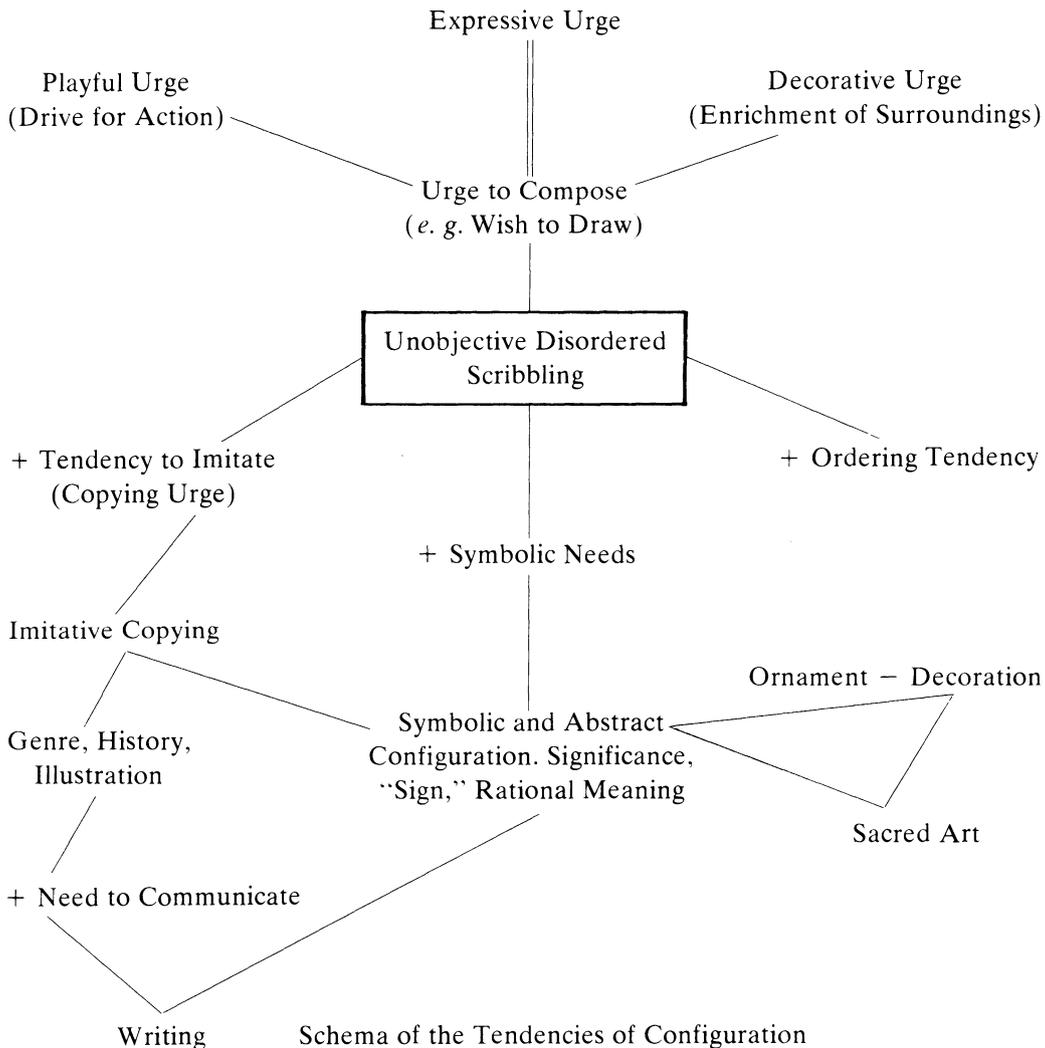
We shall not follow up in this connection psychic elements which incorporate themselves in expressive phenomena and achieve configuration because they would include everything which can become actual in the psyche. What ranking one assigns the different spheres of psychic experiences is in any case quite secondary and dependent on ethical values when seen from the perspective of configuration. Just the same, we should emphasize again, so as to avoid misunderstandings, that everything is discussed here only in the light of the central problem of configuration. This would not become altogether clear if we based our investigation of the creative process on an individual and expected to find the elements essential for future creation first in the chaos of individual life experiences.

In the expressive urge the psyche possesses something very like a vehicle which enables it to escape into the expanse of common life from the restrictions of the individual and to objectify itself in concert with other people. But what we here call the expressive urge is a dark, involuntary compulsion which itself has no means of resolution, unlike

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<sup>8</sup> The book by W. Kröttsch. *Rhythmus und Form in der freien Kinderzeichnung. Beobachtungen und Gedanken über die Bedeutung von Rhythmus und Form als Ausdruck kindlicher Entwicklung*, Leipzig, 1917, is the most important contribution to the literature of the simplest graphic expressions. The significance of this study of a boy is already evident in its attitude. Kröttsch succeeds in suppressing the reflections of the adult so completely that the child's composing experience is transmitted to us in seldom equalled purity. At the same time Kröttsch elucidates clearly, though sometimes in questionable terminology, the main problems of a psychology of expression as applied to drawing without allowing himself to become involved in statistical and other questions whose broad treatment elsewhere only too often hides valuable insights, especially in the literature about children's drawings.

compulsion in the narrow sense. Instead it is dependent on its use of other compulsive expressive means whose avenues for realization are already determined. In this sense it differs from the directed urges, which turn into unambiguous acts and are always inherently purposeful, such as the urge to play or to imitate, or the sex drive. The expressive urge can be understood only as an ever-present atmosphere, like the erotic. For that reason one cannot convince anyone of its existence who has not himself experienced it directly, and we shall not discuss it further but turn instead to the pictures in which it is evident. As we mentioned earlier, the need for expression, which satisfies itself in configuration, has at its disposal all kinds of gestures and their concrete manifestations as a means of self-representation. Here we limit ourselves to those forms of expression which manifest themselves in the visual and concrete, since we are concerned only with pictorial configuration. What we are trying to define are the roots of the forms of expression within the vital processes; in the attempt we come across some rather familiar designations. At the same time, we are fully aware that we are trying to impose a system on flowing, living events, but we believe that this schema (see below) will provide a kind of hierarchy of the compulsive bases of configuration which will clarify reality.



Closely allied to the central need for expression and similar to it in that they too are only remotely determined by objects are only two such compulsions, drives, or needs (the choice of words does not matter here), namely the urges to play and to adorn oneself. Both have sometimes been called the points of origin of configuration. The need for expression, the play instinct, and the adornment instinct coalesce in the creative drive which manifests itself clearly, without any relation to formal tendencies, in unobjective and unordered scribbles (see p. 40). As we shall show, it is quite rewarding on theoretical grounds to analyze these seldom scrutinized and inherently worthless products. If the tendency toward order, to which we also assign compulsive significance, gains predominance over the formal elements of such scrawls, it means that the essential components of ornamentation and decoration are present, whereas the imitative urge, too much abused in theory, leads to representational copies. By the need for symbols we mean everything that distinguishes primitive thinking from that directed toward rational, scientific understanding, including the magical mode of thought which – as we notice today – is not at all confined to primitives and has not lost its power, particularly since it is officially cultivated in the church under another name (see p. 26 ff.). Abstract symbolic representations can be clearly derived from the formal elements of scribbles and the need for symbols, even if they generally merge with the ordering tendency (*e.g.* in sacred art) and soon begin to include effigies. That an otherwise neutral “sign” becomes the bearer of a meaning which is not explicit but is based on origin and tradition offers a connecting point to the communicative urge. Psychologically this would be the place to introduce the development of writing, while we can easily derive didactic art, genre, and historical painting from representational copying in the service of the urge to communicate.

One thing above all must be clear in this graphic sketch of the six roots of pictorial configuration and in the brief considerations of this section, and that is that no one will ever be able to prove an origin of art in the historic sense. There are no ancient works of art in the sense that there are stone hatchets or arrowheads, which either exist as practical tools or not, everything else being a question of technology. The creative process, as realized in an contemporary work of art, is nourished by very different psychic springs, which do not always have to coalesce to deserve the name of configuration. Rather, we might draw the following analogy: as groundwater seeps to the surface and flows toward the stream in many rivulets, many expressive impulses run in many creative paths into the great stream of art. Neither historically nor according to psychological theory does there exist a beginning point. Instead there are many springs which finally transcend all life.

### *III. The Urge to Play (Active Urge)*

We can understand “play” either as any activity which has no purpose other than itself, or as an activity which follows certain rules but fulfills no practical purpose except that of entertainment, passing the time, or, more exactly, the enjoyment it entails. The second meaning is currently more common, and we had therefore better speak of the active urge as more inclusive, without saying anything about any particular kind of activity. The active urge first appears in physical movement. In it we see the simplest indication of animal vitality. Without considering the play of animals and the theories about the

meaning of their games we turn immediately to the playful activity of men. We know it as a specific mark of the life of the child. On the other hand, it fades from the behavior of the adult the more he devotes himself to his life's work, *i.e.* subordinates his actions to purpose. But we are concerned here only with the question about the role assumed by the playful attitude generally in creative processes of all kinds. It need hardly be said again that we do not have in mind the distinction between play and seriousness, but rather that between aimless activity, in which nevertheless the whole personality resonates sympathetically and which in any case passes over into intuition, and purposeful activity. The contrast parallels that between the realm of expressiveness and that of measurable facts. Indeed, all playful, aimless activities are to be understood only as expressive gestures and are to be given importance only as such. The examples of such aimless activity referred to in this chapter all have the closest relation to the basic problems of configuration. We shall have the key to all that follows only when it has become clear through the examples how far this aimless, rationally incomprehensible, playful attitude extends into the most complicated artistic creations. For this reason we also treated here the interpretation of undefined forms even though discussing all of them together could be attacked on methodological grounds.

Everyone knows a few simple examples of shapes produced in playful activity directed toward visible configuration, such as bored doodling during lectures, meetings, and in all states of exhaustion and reduced activity and attention. But doodles are by no means limited to the state of relaxation; they are also induced by tension looking for relief. The scrawls on telephone pads may be of this sort. Purposeful ideas, whether of a rational or a formal kind, are totally lacking in them, yet the movement of the hand is not completely automatic or devoid of all intent. Only the individual stroke springs from a blind impulse, while the integration of the separate parts is guided by their author, no matter how inattentive he may be. Usually there is a tendency toward repetition of symmetrical or concentric forms. Every personality always produces a pattern of typical forms so that the expert easily recognizes the originator of playful doodles; they are gestures of expression.

A playful need for activity also produces graffiti, so often perpetrated joyfully by children and adults to aggravate orderly people. Whatever they include in the way of definite ideas, whether drawn from the scene (toilet) or affectively colored experiences, is probably of secondary importance. It would be useless to draw distinctions, of course. Here again the transition from the playful to the communicative urge is gradual. Relatively little has been reported about the playful drawing of children because adults usually begin to pay attention only when children, following their suggestions, begin to explain their scribblings as real objects. If adults exert no influence on children they will draw completely freely, from the active urge alone, well beyond the fourth year, without any intended meaning, as we were able to observe clearly in one case.<sup>9</sup> The sculpting of bread, which at times played a large role in hospitals and resulted in numerous "museums," is probably familiar to everyone in everyday life, or at least it was formerly. We are speaking about a kind of inattentive play with the bread leftovers during the meal, during which all kinds of little figures emerge, at first without conscious direction, but which are subsequently explained and developed further.

Of the playful activities of primitive peoples one in particular is described quite conclusively: a number of South American rock "drawings" occur at rapids where boatmen

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<sup>9</sup> See Kröttsch, footnote 8.

used to rest. These drawings really consist of grooves worn deeply into the rock and represent partly geometric and partly human figures drawn in straight lines. It turned out that these drawings began with the groove worn into the rock by the ropes used for pulling boats upriver. Whether the questions about the magic significance of the pictures really exhausted all the possibilities cannot be judged, of course, but agreement is universal about their origins.<sup>10</sup>

What the various aforementioned pictorial activities, of which other examples could easily be cited, have in common is that their primary purpose is neither a practical aim nor any meaning. It would be an exaggeration, however, to pursue the theoretical dissection of these variously related activities too far when we only intended to show this one essential trait. In reality another tendency immediately mixes itself into the playful doodles: every shape, no matter now undefined and unobjective, demands interpretation. Even if this demand makes itself felt with different urgency to the observer and the drawer himself, to a child or an adult, to an artist or a scientist, it undoubtedly belongs to the basic phenomena which affect such playful activity. The interpretative impulse is very convincing in the case of the last example, where one of the grooves in the rock, a line resulting from physical labor, is interpreted to be a part of a figure and completed accordingly. The validity of playful interpretation can be illustrated easily enough by other examples as well which have no connection with activities but which involve the interpretation of quiescent objects from the surroundings. Primitive works of art especially still show traces of the original natural forms which may have stimulated playful activity. Many of the famous Stone Age animal pictures on the walls of Spanish caves are clearly inspired by the bulges of the rock which, after some scratching and some touches of paint, became the earliest, extremely lively, pictures from the hand of man. Among the gravestones known as Menhirs from the more recent Stone Age we can also frequently find examples in which the naturally given forms were simply interpretatively expanded into human effigies. The question of the symbolic significance of these pictures is not directly relevant to their configurative components.

The urge to interpret caused the development of a completely distinct popular art form in China. Every ethnological museum contains some examples of the variously knotted roots, mostly from the tea shrub, which were shaped into extremely grotesque human and animal figures, often by only minimal work with the carving knife. We sometimes find similar creations in the folk art of our own society.<sup>11</sup> We have all played the game of interpretation, which in folk art has resulted in permanent sculptures, on beautiful summer evenings when slowly moving clouds present us with a gift – that is the right word because our sense of being active decreases sharply as soon as we give ourselves over to interpretation – of a rich selection of sometimes realistic, sometimes intricately fantastic shapes. We know how much understanding Goethe had for the game of free association. The following lines occur in his poem *Howard's Memorial*.

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<sup>10</sup> See Koch-Grünberg. *Südamerikanische Felszeichnungen*, Berlin, 1907. Also by the same author, *Anfänge der Kunst im Urwald*, Berlin, 1906, and *Zwei Jahre unter den Indianern*, Berlin, 1909.

<sup>11</sup> At the front during the war, the art of shaping the knots of roots at the end of slender shoots – to be used as canes – into fantastic forms by a little work was highly valued. There were many men of different occupations who were able to give others some small pleasure and earn a bit of extra money by their skill. Many primitives also possess such skills. And a cultivated city dweller even published a whole collection of such carved roots: Strauch, *Wurzelplastik*. Esslingen, 1920.

Then we are astonished and hardly trust the eyes:  
Now the power of our own creation bravely asserts itself,  
Which forms the indefinable into the definite;  
Here a lion threatens, there an elephant moves.  
A camel's neck, changed into a dragon,  
A host advances, but it triumphs not  
As its power breaks on the steep rock;  
The most faithful cloud courier himself disperses.

Less "natural" is another group of impressions which inspires us to imagine faces and figures, especially when uncertain lighting makes a soberly objective appraisal difficult. Every wall covered with mortar from which pieces are falling off, every wooden wall, finally every surface marked by unevenness or spots offers opportunity for playful interpretation or even compels it. Johann Müller calls it the plasticity of fantasy and describes most graphically how much pleasure it gave him when he was a child.<sup>12</sup> Aside from the dim light, which facilitates the power of suggestion, the personal qualities of the observer play the most important role. It is well known that children recognize all sorts of animal life in the food left on their plates and find a basis for seeing in every stick of wood a horse or a doll. Also susceptible are "artistic" persons, women more than men, imaginative persons more than practical ones. Exhaustion, as we often note, also encourages us to use an actual form only as a foil for playful interpretation. Many of us know from experience what we can do with wallpaper patterns prior to falling asleep or while we are in a fever. The interpretation of shapes is cautiously introduced in the currently popular blot graphics. The cloudy images offered by ink spots are of course especially inspirational. Many an introvert has filled his quiet hours with them. The series of blot graphics made by Justinus Kerner and accompanied by poems in which he freely expanded his interpretations of the grotesque motifs of the "pictures," are the most familiar. The readiness for interpretive play is, according to these superficial observations, dependent on a person's general attitude toward his environment. Those people whom we found particularly susceptible agree that their relationship to the world is more affective than perceptive. Accordingly, all interpretative experiences have a slightly supernatural character, even within psychologically normal limits.

The relationships of all free games of association to the configurative process in great art are much closer than they may seem at first. They are by no means restricted simply to the immediate circle of childish and primitive configuration but are especially and vitally active in all art that is not completely realistic. Leonardo da Vinci, who intended to turn painting into a science, was nevertheless broad-minded enough to recognize the playful components fully and even to recommend their application, although they hardly agreed with his principles. He speaks of a "newly invented kind of seeing which may appear narrow and almost ridiculous" but which nevertheless stirs the mind to invent . . .

It consists of this, that you look at many walls which are covered with all sorts of spots, or at a mixture of . . . stones," or "into . . . the ashes in the fire, into the clouds or the mud — if you observe them closely you will discover wonderful inventions in them: compositions of battles, of animals and men; of terrifying things like devils, various landscapes ornamented with mountains, streams, rocks, trees, great plains, valleys and hills; lively arrangements of peculiarly strange figures, facial expressions, dress, and uncounted things which you

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<sup>12</sup> The physiologist Johann Müller has published his observations in *Über die phantastischen Gesichterscheinungen*, Koblenz, 1826, quoted at length in Jaspers, *Allgemeine Psychopathologie*, 2d ed., pp. 41 and 43.

can bring to completion . . . Through entangled and undefined things the mind is opened to new inventions. But take care to know beforehand that you are able to form the members of the body that you wish to portray.<sup>13</sup>

On the other hand, he accuses Sandro Botticelli of abusing these suggestions and gives us his opinion that,

This study is in vain because if one throws a sponge against the wall it would leave a spot on it in which one would see a beautiful landscape. It is true that one sees all sorts of designs in such a spot – and it is just as with the sound of bells to which you can also give words as they occur to you. But although such spots give you designs they do not teach you to complete any particular part. And that particular painter painted very sad landscapes.

Problems such as these appear repeatedly in the pedagogic efforts of painters who think about the basis of their art, notably in the case of Adolf Hölzel who has now passed through three cycles of differently directed artistic tendencies as a teacher and who again and again attracts rising young talents to himself. His power of attraction is apparently due to the fact that he is always close to the roots of the configurative process and never becomes doctrinaire. He also underwent a phase of development in which he consistently probed what would result from purposeless activity and subsequent interpretation. These efforts lead us so deeply into the configurative process that it would be rewarding to sketch them here briefly. We shall have to refer to them several times later on.

Suppose that one scribbles aimlessly on a sheet of paper while averting his eyes, and covers as much of the sheet as possible with a confusion of lines of variously strong and variously projecting curves and only then, looking for the first time, lets himself be inspired to some composition or other, whether figure or landscape. If he emphasizes this composition by means of some added contours, the result is a drawing which has a far more unified character than a similar sketch assembled from details. Even the most modestly gifted can convince himself of this fact by experimenting. Hölzel's theoretical opinion certainly implies correctly that the "tools" of the artist (*viz.*, the basic elements: lines, forms, and colors) have some power of their own; that is, they contain a certain potential energy as soon as they exist in any combination and are viewed interpretatively with an eye for pictorial cohesion. One can easily describe this kind of observation as a somewhat fantastic mythology of the artistic elements which involves cheap personifications, but it contains a profound insight which affords a better approach to the central configurative process than conceptual deductions.

The configurative component, which we may say is grown in a pure culture in such experiments, is always a part of the various production methods of an artist, even if in very different degrees depending on personal talent, the effective range of the individual's rational superstructure (schooling, purposefulness), and technical peculiarities. Watercolor techniques, for example, in which colors constantly flow into one another, force the artist to exploit accidentally developed nuances, and offer him the chance to allow an unexpected favorable constellation to remain as it appeared or even to adjust

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<sup>13</sup> Leonardo da Vinci, *Das Buch von der Malerei*, ed. by H. Ludwig, Vienna, 1882, pt. II, sections 60 and 66. See also the quotation from Keller's *Der Grüne Heinrich*, footnote 43, below.

the whole picture to accidental details. Many graphic artists play a similar game of improvisation by abandoning their copperplate to chance for a few moments during etching and then appraising the result, or by allowing the grain of the wood block to stand out in printing. We come now to the constraint imposed by any given block of marble. We know that Michelangelo allowed himself to be inspired by such a block to interpret a figure into it, and we find that numerous other examples of plastic art have similar histories. We well remember how the constraint of a block entered into the discussions about Max Klinger's marble group which he called *The Drama*, but without being given its proper weight. The uneven effect of the work is undoubtedly the result of the artist interpreting individual figures into various sides of his block without achieving any kind of unity for the group. He therefore had to substitute rational ties for those not within the work itself.

The element common to these examples is that naturally given or playfully created forms are not accepted at their objective face value. Instead, the observer, often himself an artist, adds forms from the fund of his preconceptions. He is inspired to let latent formal preconceptions come alive within himself. The external inspirations, arising from undefined accidents of form, may be intensified enough to become demands, depending on the suggestibility of the observer. It then seems as if the formal preconceptions which the observer developed were present in the object — as if he saw them. This psychological fact is generally assigned to a specific mental capacity, namely fantasy. It was important to us to avoid this vague concept and to underline the relationship of fantastic activity in its many ramifications to that simple playful urge to activity which appears in every child and in all kinds of adults when they compose something.

#### IV. *The Ornamental Urge (Environment Enrichment)*

In discussing the origins of art, philosophers, psychologists, and art historians have often cited a need for ornamentation; it seemed to offer an especially convincing explanation when biological interpretations of life gained increasing popularity during the nineteenth century. We can demonstrate, using basic psychological insights carefully, that the need for ornamentation dominates the daily and, even more, the religious life of primitive peoples far more intensively than that of civilized peoples. We can also name numerous animal phenomena and behavioral traits which, given a little simple anthropomorphosis, can be attributed to this need. Inasmuch as "ornamentation" in animals is limited mostly to the males and develops its full splendor during the mating season, some observers consider the facts sufficient to support an evolutionary interpretation of ornamentation — one that is certainly not altogether incorrect. We must recognize, of course, that the splendid preening of the male animal is closely related to sexuality, and we would certainly not call it "ornamentation." The animal does not decorate itself. Its splendid ornamentation becomes a part of it without its doing or knowledge. Something happens to it in the course of life of which it is the object. When we see primitives decorate themselves it occurs to us that they do it mainly to resemble animals, whether they use feathers, colorful paints, or masks. But no matter how their behavior may resemble that of animals, the distinction is vast and crucial because it involves the meaning of the word "ornamentation;" viz., an intentional emphasis is given an object, whether it be a man

or an inert thing, by an enriching addition. Whether we seek the psychological motivation in personal affection, magical significance, the wish to affect others, etc., visually the meaning will always be the distinction of what is decorated by means of an ornament, although in the context of actual life this meaning will probably always be overshadowed by particular meanings inherent in the occasion, as when people paint themselves for war, funerals, puberty rites, weddings, the exorcism of demons, or simply to distinguish friend from foe.

Without thinking of the changes in ornamentation in the course of time we shall cite here only some simple examples to clarify its connection with all creative acts. When we cover a piece of paper with doodles, when a child arranges colorful pebbles on his mud pie, or when we plant flowers in our gardens, one quality is common to all of these quite different activities, namely the enrichment of the outer world by the addition of perceptual elements. Like the need for activity, it is a final, irreducible psychological fact – an urge in man not to be absorbed passively into his environment, but to impress on it traces of his existence beyond those of purposeful activity. This need extends to everything created out of necessity: houses, clothing, arms and tools, and all later inventions – from the clay vessels and bone and stone implements of the primitives to the ash trays, lamps, and books of our own day. Aside from anything else we may say about the more central need for expression and symbolization, it exists within all three distinguishable kinds of decoration: that applied to the human body, one's own or another; to tools, implements, and protective devices; and decoration used in all super-individual activity against a magical and demonic background. It also exists in all human products which are not intended to be practical. Its ubiquity shows that the urge to enrich the world is basic to man.

## V. *The Ordering Tendency (Rhythm and Rule)*

Some few principles of formal order have appeared to govern ornamentation in all times and societies. In other pictorial forms they had to compete with other tendencies for predominance. These formal principles are those of linear arrangement, regular pattern, symmetry, and proportion; they can be traced back, if you will, to numbers and quantities and to their mathematical connections, but they are in such harmony with the structure of the human body that we are reminded how much the proud boast, man is the measure of all things,<sup>14</sup> also applies to art. Whether we wish to base the principles

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<sup>14</sup> See the logical and, because of its strictly conceptual conciseness, much misunderstood, theory of Schmarsow. Here we would have an opportunity to discuss the works about art theory of the last two generations and to trace what we sketch here back to certain ancestors. Only the expert knows how difficult that would be to do in brief since this subject, more than any other, is loaded with misunderstandings and universal resentments. The notation must suffice that we do not write this sketch on the basis of a quick orientation but rather on the basis of more than 15 years of art historical research which, under the influence of Schmarsow and Lipps, was condensed in 1908 into a dissertation and some articles. No matter how far the sketch given here of the psychological roots of configuration may diverge from the strict and often conceptually dogmatic systems of Semper, Riegl, Wickhoff, and Schmarsow, the expert will nevertheless quickly spot the threads which run to them, although our approach to the problems of configuration is quite different. And we dared to take the strictly psychologically intended approach precisely because we believe that we have liberated ourselves from value judgments (for which it was probably essential that we rid ourselves of the ties to any specialized subject). If this approach is to be tested outside of the context in which it appears here, we must recognize

of form on the physique and movement of man, on the rhythm of the pulse, on the breath and the walk which we might rediscover metaphorically in straight rows of lines or designs, and in the symmetry and proportions of the body, or whether we appeal to cosmic laws, is a philosophical question. If we also recall the symmetric construction of crystals and plants, the changes of day and night, ebb and tide, summer and winter, we will be more inclined to drop the anthropocentric measure and to recognize the measure and model of all configurative principles in the rhythmic pattern of all life processes instead. We are far more interested in the fact that these ordering tendencies appear necessarily, and all the more surely the smaller the role played by the imitative tendency. That is precisely the meaning of ornament – which is primarily at issue – that it, first, decorates and, secondly, is governed by an intrinsic law, an order dictated not by the object represented but by abstract formal principles. The beginnings of the simplest ornamental forms, whether those found on the earliest clay vessels long before the invention of the potter's wheel or those used in the decoration of the body, such as seashells worn on a string, have little importance for us. We define an ornament as a decorated object dominated by rules of order, without consideration for its use in any particular place. "Ornamental" therefore signifies forms which do not derive their rules from the real and objective continuity of a model but rather from abstract order.

In an ornament formal elements are generally lined up in single rows. Things are quite different when a given basic pattern is to be divided by formal elements. In such a division, say of a regular limited plane surface (a picture surface or a sheet of paper) the center is heavily emphasized, or a symmetrical axis is drawn through the center. Beyond that the edge, which as the border of the continuous plane already has special importance, is emphasized either by a kind of framing or by a regular ordering (spacing) of formal elements along the edge. The value of these most common basic ways of dividing a plane surface lies clearly in the fact that they preserve the unity of the whole composition within a multitude of single decorative shapes. The numerous other possibilities can be easily developed out of the constantly repeated basic laws. The words "decoration" and "decorative" are used here only for the fleetingly indicated division of the surface when it follows some rules of order. Besides the aforementioned strict division of the surface, which deals with the edges and the center, we must also mention the continuous pattern which in a way presents itself only as a section of an infinitely large surface, as perhaps a sheet of wallpaper. Furthermore, in addition to the strict and measurable order of ornaments shown in the great majority of our implements and especially in all classical plane decoration, we have to distinguish a free, autonomous order. It adjusts only vaguely to the law of the edge and spreads out over the surface in controlled, but by no means logical, relationships.

It has become common to call the succession of similar elements rhythm; not only is music called rhythmic, but quite generally the formed development of a gesture is called "rhythmic," because of the original meaning, which is "flowing." Rhythm emphasizes all formal gestures and their manifestations as bearers of vital processes above other occurrences which follow measurable rules, whether through geometric regularity, an

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that it is beyond all traditional valuation and is therefore almost beyond objections which are based not on psychology but on the postulates of art theory. As far as we can see, these psychological roots are quite compatible with such principles, which are derived from direct contact with the works and are constantly refreshed by it, as in the case of Fiedler, Wölfflin, and Worringer, to name just a few. Here, where we are still primarily concerned with communicating the new material, we have to forgo a confrontation with the very active new psychology of art. There will be enough opportunity to consider psychopathological border areas, such as those covered by Utitz and Müller-Freienfels, among others, in later discussions.

exact sequence of formal elements, curves, etc. The “rhythm” of a drawing consists of the more or less even moving development of its lines as soon as these somehow approximate a definite type. No matter what the lines mean or whether they are meaningful at all, a uniform rhythmic flow can give their arrangement a force which has a stronger effect than all other formal components – in our opinion precisely because gestures speak in them quite directly, while allowing no inference of any purpose. The only true comparison would be with pure melody in music, as in the solo sonatas for violin or cello by Johann Sebastian Bach. The rhythmic flow of elements belongs to the essential imponderables in every creation, however, even if only the connoisseur is aware of it.

One might object that such a loose definition of the word “rhythm” would promote an imprecise use, but the distinction between rhythm, meaning the sequence of similar quantities in similar chronological or spatial segments, and rules (cadence, law), meaning the exact and measurable sequence of equal quantities in equal chronological or spatial segments (Klages), seems to be of such fundamental importance that we cannot do without it. Because we have become used to machine-produced uniformity our response to the rhythm of life is extraordinarily low today. Since the ability to comprehend and value configurations primarily depends on such a response, however, we shall persist in retaining our definition of rhythm as living, uniform movement, and our definition of rule and of law as mechanical and exact uniformity. Both participate in the ordering tendency. What is finally realized in any configuration depends on other factors.

## VI. *The Tendency to Imitate (Copying Urge)*

We mention the copying or imitative tendency only now for a good reason. We discussed the roots of the creative drive as a group with the intention, among others, of showing how many essential aspects of the creative process we can emphasize without speaking of this particular one, which for too long was and continues to be the most popular.

Without following up the biological bases of the imitative drive, which would take us too far from the main theme, we should mention just a few facts to serve as a foil for the psychological discussions. Nobody can doubt, of course, that the pleasure of successful imitation was more important for whole millennia and societies than the need, say, to realize symbols objectively. In support we usually cite Dutch painting, which without constraint depicted the joys of the real world. Guided only by the tradition of art schools, it never tired of making the world appear as faithful to nature as possible. The same ingenuous imitative urge imposed itself on the naturalism of the nineteenth century, matching the outlook of the times, which were increasingly dedicated to a materialistic “reality” cult very damaging to artistic culture. This culture, however, is now to be restored in the course of a few decades by drawing on the resources of the art of all ages and peoples, with a considerable amount of blind enthusiasm.

The history of aesthetics and its theories about copying provide us with one of the best examples of the tenacity with which dogmatically reinforced thought can fascinate humanity for centuries despite its obvious distortions. Socrates defines painting as imitation of what is visible, and Plato distinguishes it as imitative art from the technical arts. Just the same, Plato objects in *The Republic* to the use of perspective as leading to illusionistic deception, and he thereby suggests formal rules to govern imitation. But Aristotle’s

unfortunate teachings about imitation, which fixed all arts to this single, most superficial characteristic, was dominant until Immanuel Kant. Aristotle's teachings still retain their popularity, like all teachings which are based on facts so simple that every man thinks he understands them and would even be able to discover them for himself. According to Aristotle it is reality that is imitated in painting, action in the drama, mood in music, and psychic movements in the dance. That these definitions provide only an empty system to which Aristotle himself added a multitude of valuable ideas is of course easily forgotten, leaving only the ominous cliché, "as Aristotle already said, painting consists of the imitation of reality" — whereupon every writer, burdened with these intellectual chains, begins to struggle more or less uselessly with the variety of pictorial configuration. The already constrained condition of basic aesthetic problems was made even less promising by the concept of the beautiful in nature and art. So the idealistic philosophy of art remained a dialectical struggle for concepts which floated only too thinly and alienatedly on top of the vital abundance of real creation. Until today every theoretical argument in which the copying tendency has no meaning except one (namely that of the objectively directed component of configuration) must defend itself specifically against the deeply ingrained imitation dogma.

Here we are primarily concerned with two facts. First, the imitative tendency says nothing at all about the reality or unreality of the represented "objects" because these are posited as eidetic images, and it is irrelevant for an eidetic image, which itself strives to become external configuration, whether or not it incorporates something really existing and visible or whether its object can only be represented. It is in this sense, perhaps, that the bourgeois conception of God as an old man with a long beard and comfortable familiar surroundings is an eidetic image: He is copied. The imitative tendency has only this one aim — that the viewer may see in the picture as nearly as possible the same conception that motivated the painter, that an eidetic image may appear as nearly as possible the same for the viewer as for the artist. The other fundamental fact concerns the form of representation or style. Whether an object is pictured realistically or abstractly is, from the standpoint of the imitative tendency, completely secondary. The tendency is a purely psychological concept. What is of primary psychological importance is that the artist is determined by the eidetic image.

We shall now examine the roots of the creative drive which have already been investigated, to see to what degree they are independent of the imitative drive or how closely and necessarily they are connected with it. We found the playful active drive essentially independent of the copying drives, though it can easily take them over. In that case it is characteristic that the copying tendency is not directed toward a real, existing object but draws freely on the fund of preconceptions. To the degree that the copying tendency dominates, the playful character of the activity declines. On the other hand, the imitation of strange movements is always a part of child's play and therefore also of children's drawings.

The importance of the imitative or copying drive is even smaller in the need for ornamentation. We saw how the ornamented object as the end of ornamentation subordinates all formal effort to itself. That is how we explained to our satisfaction the overwhelming importance of the formal, basic principles which show themselves in ornamentation and decoration. We know that there are whole ornamental styles without actual models, such as the geometric designs which for ages have been counted as the purest ornamental styles. It is also typical for any models used for ornamentation that they are not realistically (naturalistically) recreated but are instead abstractly stereotyped or

stylized. Therein lies an implicit but nevertheless obvious tendency not to emphasize objective forms as such but to include them as elements under the laws of ornamentation, just like squares, circles, or triangles. The ancient dispute as to whether abstract ornaments originated from models or whether real objects had been interpreted into abstract ornaments seems unsolvable as long as it is conducted in the form of a theoretical either-or. It is hardly possible to show a step in human development in which purely realistic decorations developed because of a lack of any abstract ornamental tendency, or, on the contrary, one in which are found only abstract ornamentation without any models.<sup>15</sup> The paleolithic period approaches the first type and the neolithic the second, but in neither do we see the extremes realized. We shall probably have to assume that both tendencies were originally compulsive, and test every case for their relative mixtures. We are certain that these two tendencies also alternate, so that generally one loses importance as the other gains.

The copying tendency also appears as an auxiliary when we inspect pictures from the point of view of the expressive need. Elsewhere we pointed out that one can perhaps express dynamic qualities more impressively without realistic copying than by the slavish representation of total reality. In the case of tools, implements, and tectonic forms expressive forms appear equally with and without copying tendencies. The bulge of a column certainly is not supposed to show how a pillar made of a soft material would spread out, yet the expressive value of the bulge asserts itself, as if the column were stressed most at this spot and therefore had to be strengthened. The flowers and leaves of the column's capital are, on the other hand, more or less faithful reproductions which lead in ornamentally ordered curves to the beams and at the same time symbolize their function – that of bearing the roof.

The reproduction of real objects is certainly not necessary for the other purpose of the expressive need, *i.e.* the objective expression of feelings. As surely as every affective experience attaches itself to images of persons and objects, and can be formed in this connection, just so have line and color – spatial forms somewhat less, perhaps – expressive potential in the musical sense. We shall discuss elsewhere how formal art stands between the two poles of artistic creation, that of imitation directed toward nature, and that of form directed toward abstraction, rule, and shape. Nearest the former we find sculpture and epic poetry; nearest the latter, music. It is after all peculiar to music that it does not copy something given in nature but is able to realize and evoke emotional processes in the listener purely through melodic line, timbre, and rhythmical progress,

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<sup>15</sup> The problem of the relationship in primitives between ornament and natural model must surely be one of the most fascinating to be found in art theory. The contributions of ethnologists so far have been unrewarding because the psychological preconditions are missing. Nothing can show the dilemma more impressively than a close examination of Stephan's book, *Südseekunst*, Berlin, 1907. This physician and researcher, who died young, was quite well informed in art theory, and stubbornly attempted proofs of the origin of ornaments. But when he accepted the consistent explanations of numerous natives as proof, he fell victim to many false conclusions because of his lack of artistic and psychological knowledge, especially in evaluating decorative components. The natives may for instance describe the narrow interspace between two triangles (= bird wings) as a snake – this cannot by any means lead to the conclusion that they have depicted a snake by this strip. It is just as likely that they have no word for such a strip and simply call any long, thin form "snake." In any case the basic differentiation must be maintained once and for all which exists between inception (the psychomotor process) and later recognition and description. For primitives simple form elements continue to be representatives of real objects because they are incapable of denoting them in any other way. How this fact blends with the more playful and decorative tendencies and is in turn colored by magical intentions can be pursued only in the presence of a lot of material and of many good individual studies. We shall never be able to say that an ornament had been created purely representatively or purely abstractly, but we shall have to weigh the participating creative components critically in each case.

all of them subject to the laws of numbers. Even if such psychic processes cannot be described as unambiguously as pictures, they are by common consent the most immediate expression of the emotions. All the attempts to construct pictures of pure color harmonies, and pure (*i.e.* nonrepresentative) lines and abstract spatial forms are based on such considerations. While theory no doubt often plays a large role we cannot deny such attempts an inner justification. When serious artists meet with a total lack of understanding they can rightly claim that our organs are too crude for their subtle works and can perceive them no more than unmusical people can comprehend pure music. Often they can absorb only popular music, opera, and songs which suggest concrete thoughts to them.

## VII. The Need for Symbols (Significance)

The psychological foundations of the symbolic significance of an effigy can be explained only through the works of primitive peoples. Without taking into account the chronological sequence of the various types we nevertheless have to distinguish between the main variations: (1) The idol is itself a demon. It is personified, in other words, and considered to be in possession of all magic powers; a rock, perhaps resembling a person, a tree, or a carved figure amount to the same thing. This tangible demon is conceived of in such a personal way as to be subject to abuse if he does not perform according to his owner's expectations. (2) The effigy is part of the model, whether demon or enemy, who moves about but is always present in the image. Whatever happens to the image happens also to him who is represented by it. We find here the roots of the magic of analogy: if I decapitate the effigy, the one whom it represents will also lose his head due to a magically transmitted effect. (3) The effigy, in itself nothing more than a piece of wood or a stone made identifiable by minor alterations, is inhabited by the soul of the demon, the forbear, etc. At the same time, the sacredness of the effigy's location is often decisive whether the soul lives there or not; the image serves as the demon's habitat within the sacred site. As soon as the effigy is moved elsewhere it becomes only an insignificant piece of wood. It is essential in all cases that emotional and preconceptual complexes be materially incorporated in the natural object or picture. This alone gives them their importance, while the spatial creation of a "motif," be it man or animal, is secondary or, as in the third case, has not even anything to do with the magic significance evoked in it only by circumstances.<sup>16</sup>

The object becomes a symbol, *i. e.* a representative of a force existing independently of the image, only in the third case. The words "idol" and "symbol" are used not quite consistently with these facts. An idol *is* magic power; the symbol *implies* it. What is described as a fetish in the narrower sense is always an idol. Idols exist only in primitive forms of thought. The symbol, on the other hand, remains alive with minor transformations to this day, together with analogous actions in popular customs and church ceremonies. A scientist used to thinking simply of causes and effects may easily fail to note how these remains of magic preconceptions retain their vitality in naive heads even today. Fully conscious of this fact are mainly people who are able to discharge their feelings

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<sup>16</sup> The problems presented by drawing as the bearer of significance are still presented most lucidly in Th. W. Danzel's *Die Anfänge der Schrift*, Leipzig, 1912.

for life into artistic configurations of all kinds. It is indeed the readiness to rescue symbolic thought from enlightenment that seems to open the doors to creativeness. What we understand by the need for symbols or the tendency to symbolic significance can be even more closely defined. Psychologically it is the tendency to refer in representational configurations to emotional and preconceptual complexes which cannot themselves be visually presented.<sup>17</sup> The viewer therefore cannot simply perceive an emotion, as he would a motif, in an effigy or ornament. He is dependent on the mediation of conceptual explanations whenever conventional symbols are not used.

We must now ask ourselves how this symbolic significance in a work makes its appearance; whether one is made to feel it by the immediate impression and whether certain qualities of an effigy point to it. Experience teaches us – and theoretical proof is easy – that in the case of the pure copying tendency a special symbolic significance is rare and usually results in a sad artistic abortion. No one would look for symbolic significance in a bouquet of flowers, a portrait, or a landscape. The more naturalistic the work the more unlikely it is to have symbolic significance. If, on the other hand, there appear combinations of forms or familiar objects which are not usual in common experience, some kind of psychic process must have taken place within their author from which the combination resulted. He has given his work a meaning which is not obvious, but can be deciphered only by experts. Aside from symbolic significance, of course, there can also be simple references to external events or internal experiences. We are all familiar with the banderoles which, especially in medieval art, seem to issue out of the mouths of the persons represented and which arrange themselves as flowing curves into the linear pattern of the pictures, having as their major purpose the direct transmission to the viewer of thoughts or exclamations. They are therefore bearers of rational content and increase the significance of a scene beyond the impression which the drawing alone is able to give. This rational component, which does not belong to the pure creative process, has other variations, such as captions which identify persons, comments of the artist, or even verse, which robs the drawing of its independence and reduces it to an illustration.

If we combine in this way simple rational interpretation and symbolic significance it is because both are in fact, as psychologically completely different phenomena, completely distinct from the specific creative components which can be analyzed from the purely formal point of view alone. They direct attention beyond the perceivable manifestations of configuration, to which all expressive phenomena also belong, to relationships which are essentially imperceptible, namely to the origins of all psychic elements which at the same time include all the emotional ones. These psychic and emotional forces cannot, however, be depicted in the narrow sense, but can only be represented symbolically, in the sense that the rhythm of the lines, the relations between lines, and the symbolism of colors communicate emotional experiences to us. Conventional symbols may be used here or completely abstract means of expression may be sought out, but in any case we recognize the importance of the need for symbols in creation only in the shift of the accent among the configurative components. As part of its nature this need de-emphasizes pure imitation and promotes systems of order. What it emphasizes is formal convention, rhythmical solemnity, and the dominance of abstract geometric elements – everything, in short, which stresses conventional rules and regularities at the expense of a picture's individuality.

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<sup>17</sup> Let us emphasize especially that this common determination of concepts is completely superficial and insufficient. It was important to us, however, not to stir up the confused problem of the concept of symbol because we are unable to add any research findings from it to our material.

Whenever symbolic significance dominates a work, it loses its inherent purpose and becomes the bearer of the symbolism. We already emphasized how magic is of such surpassing importance in the works of primitives that an unformed stone can represent a demon as well as a statue can. The magic consecration is what is important, not the work done on the object, which is only a sign for what it signifies. Here, as is finally becoming clear, lie the roots of the fixed symbolism of signs and of all written characters. The symbolic effigy becomes the representative of magical religious conceptions, and of objects and their qualities. Because such symbols serve a communicative need (which itself should no longer be rationalistically misinterpreted as the cause) there emerges picture writing – sentences, words, syllables, and letters. This brief hint is intended to fix the relationships between pictures, symbols, and writing in their proper places in our schema.

### VIII. *Eidetic Image and Configuration.*<sup>18</sup>

Previous generations imagined that they could find the basis of our conception of objects in the physiology of sight. Their belief was supported by psychology, then predominantly physiologically oriented, and backed by the outlook of a naturalistically and materialistically minded age. Georg Hirth's two-volume *Kunstphysiologie* (Physiology of Art) shows to what astonishing degree relatively spiritually minded people became lost in physiological delusions.

A particularly crass case will prove better than any theoretical considerations what primitive errors can result from limited perspectives. A few years ago the great painter El Greco became very popular, having been rediscovered and recommended to the public by adroit art journalists. While the friends of art allowed themselves to be captivated by the ecstatic exhilaration of his pictures and willingly integrated the exaggerated length of his human figures into their total experience, some physiologically oriented writers tried to prove circumstantially that El Greco had misdrawn his figures because there was something wrong with his eyesight! They thought themselves in fact able to prove the presence of astigmatism. It is unrewarding to follow up all the reasons cited. One would think that anyone who had ever speculated about objects, cognition, concepts, and representation should be able to find the rather patent fallacy in the argument: if the painter had really seen the people of his environment taller by two heads because

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<sup>18</sup> We are completely aware that the compact formulation of these facts, which are most important for an understanding of configurative processes, is terminologically vulnerable because we avoid coming to grips with the very active detailed psychological investigations of the last 10 years about *Gestalt*, imagination, etc. (Witasek, Koffka, Wertheimer, Köhler, Bühler, and Jaensch, among others.) At the moment it seemed more important to isolate the psychic facts of our borderland as much as possible than to vacillate between the opinions of psychological schools which are not yet substantiated. Our experience, based on conversations, has led us to fear most that our posing of the problem would not be understood because of an insufficient understanding for creative art. Only those who gain access to our material because they are artists or friends of artists, or who immerse themselves deeply in the literature about artistic creation, stand on common ground with us. Indeed, we are tempted to define our inner attitude even more closely: a man who shows his appreciation of art perhaps by a voluntary recognition of publicly acclaimed artists or who is proud because he recognizes the peculiarities of an artist familiar to him does not thereby prove his understanding. Only a man who is always ready to acknowledge the configurative process as a basically honorable phenomenon even in its most distorted variations, whether those of a grotesquely audacious beginner or a senile artist, and who leaves it to the philistine to make cheap fun of the often admittedly strange accompaniments of production, qualifies.

of a structural fault of his eyes and had intended to bring a faithful reproduction of this, his view, to the canvas, the reproduction would have turned out matching the real model fully. He would have made the proportions of the painted figures match, in the perception of his astigmatic eyes, those of his models, and would have compared the perceived image of a real person with the perceived image of a painted figure. If the proportions of both perceived images are to be equal, the proportions of man and painted figure must also be equal. It brings some shame to the psychologists who wished to make an optical disturbance of El Greco responsible for their ignorance that it took an ophthalmologist (Greef) to make this simple calculation.

Anomalies in the physiological viewing process can undoubtedly affect the conception of real objects and therefore their representation (for instance color blindness), but the attempts to date to recognize disturbances in the work of any artist are totally unsatisfactory. It therefore seems more rewarding to make sure first of the psychic components which determine our conceptions; at the same time the possible aberrations may become clear to us. Without allowing ourselves to become confused by our consciousness of the generally unclear theoretical problems, we shall try merely to present the irrefutable major components of formal conceptualization. We are not so much interested in the development of concepts as in what is present for us *in* a concept or idea and how its components relate to each other according to their importance for the total concept. We limit ourselves completely to visually derived ideas.

Those who are predisposed toward physiological explanations always start with the fallacy (one which is hard to overcome) that all well meaning people could agree on one conception of reality, as we might agree on the results of research. They believe that their canonically conceptualized world, popularly thought of as a sort of photographic reproduction, is now about to be subtly altered by more or less arbitrary creative tendencies and by a certain degree of technical skill. In opposition to this singularly prejudiced opinion we cannot emphasize enough the basic psychological fact that in every "picture" the objective facts have already been actively worked on, not just in recall but as early as the process of cognition. Instead of the term "picture," with its various definitions and usages, we had better use "eidetic image" for the psychic phenomenon intended here. Judgments based on experience and other conceptual components far outweigh the perceptual data in the "idea" about an object. If we wanted to cite all the sources of conceptions, whose importance is somewhat overestimated, the visual would be the most likely to produce eidetic images by itself, though the motor functions would not at all get in the way. We are less interested in the differentiating trait than the result: the eidetic image necessary to spatial tangible configuration.

The psychological facts may be described as follows: first comes the recognition of the real object as a thing, a process during which in the beginning only a few sensible data enter into its eidetic image. Next the chaos of the sensible data is ordered visually. The process of comprehension then runs its course variously, depending on the observer's attitude. It leads either, aided by a conceptual subsumption of the sense data, to a cognitive image which corresponds to conceptions in the usual sense and further to a knowledge of the object, or it directs itself to the consolidation of what is seen into an eidetic image. This image can be intensified into becoming a valid form of reality through a choice of the sense data and an emphasis on the constituent traits, a process in which expressive values clearly play a decisive role. Goethe, who must be considered an expert on this subject, meant something similar by his statement that the realization that all facts must already be theory (perceived being) is the peak of understanding.

Conrad Fiedler has produced the most logical description of these first elements of the process of configuration, as we may call the perceptual comprehension of our environment, although for him the material object still emanates from the summation of single data.<sup>19</sup> That, however, changes little of the value of the basic insight: in the imagination a picture of the object is formed during observation. "Form is encompassed in the confusion which dominates just those undeveloped areas of consciousness" in the pre-artistic stage of perception. In any collection of sense impressions, he says, there already exists a fragment of form which creatively begins to penetrate the disjointed material provided by the senses. But perception does not immediately result in the formed image because there still exist compulsions running counter to its aims – most likely rational strivings for knowledge which get in the way of the becoming of form.

Fiedler's findings therefore also support our opinion and guard it against the tendentious misinterpretation that the three-sided process (perception-configuration-work) must necessarily dissociate itself from all purpose – in particular from the cognitive impulse aiming at knowledge because that impulse aims not at a perceptual image but at a complete one. The more bits of knowledge that enter into an eidetic image, however, the more its identity is threatened. It is not as if there existed a reciprocal relation between perception and knowledge. Instead, knowledge disturbs the perceptual conceptualization, and the latter must correct for the damage by increased performance. In any case, we cannot avoid describing this potential as creative power or pictorial talent whose relationship to cognition is so fundamental that we are prepared from the very outset to see it fully developed, even in persons having only a minimal amount of rational knowledge. The most sublime example of the grotesque discrepancies which can occur between the two psychic spheres is Anton Bruckner's music.

The concept of form which Fiedler developed in connection with the psychological observations we cited is absolute.<sup>20</sup> We have no reason here to pursue the philosophic side of the problem. Although something like a "law of form" may well exist, for us it is important to cast psychological light on the process of configuration, and we must therefore point out that numerous factors play a role in the perceptual shaping already taking place during the act of observation which belong to the personality of the observer and bear his impress. These personal factors can have a retarding or accelerating effect on the eidetic image as it is forming: they always help to determine it. We are dealing with forces which are partly anchored within the individual himself, his "mark," as we say, in which his affective constitution merges with his general expressive talent, numerous developmental influences, and his knowledge about the object, as well as with the characteristics of the race, surroundings, and age into which he was born. To elucidate only one of these factors, which is little known, we remind the reader of Goethe's descriptions of his journey to Italy: he feels himself constantly pressed to view the landscape through the eyes of familiar painters; that is, he brings along complete eidetic images of the landscapes and notices how he must adjust the newly received images to those already present. Anyone who has lived intensively with works of art will have had similar experiences. Stated briefly, the facts prove that our eidetic image is not formed by the individual,

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<sup>19</sup> Conrad Fiedler's writings on art published by Marbach, Leipzig, 1896, among them especially *Der Ursprung der künstlerischen Tätigkeit*.

<sup>20</sup> The topic, freely developed by Fiedler as the philosophical observation of a friend of art, takes a strictly didactic character in Adolf Hildebrand (*Das Problem der Form in der bildenden Kunst*, 5th ed., 1905) and H. Cornelius (*Elementargesetze der bildenden Kunst*, 1908), and since then supports that school of philosophical aesthetics which is based on an absolute concept of form.

real, and external object; instead we form a personal eidetic image out of this object by applying a personal system.

These facts can be illuminated from another field of interest as well. Ethnologists have recently begun research into the psychic life of primitives, starting with an ethnopsychology which largely excludes deeply rooted civilized conventions. In animal psychology too the more naive anthropomorphic interpolations are being more carefully avoided. We have therefore reached the point of being able to compare the complex or collective conceptualizing method of primitives with our more analytical one. When we hear that for the Cora Indians of Mexico the sky itself was at first quite surely an eidetic image (in front of the stars), that the earth was considered a person, that whole species of animals and plants were thought of as individual creatures, and that furthermore a man's shadow, mirror image, and name were considered parts of his body, that on the other hand many species of bees were identified separately while the concept "bee" was unknown, one conclusion emerges from these psychologically divergent facts: the grouping of sense data into eidetic images and concepts takes place very differently for these people than for us, and other qualities of complexity or shape exist for them than for us. A particularly graphic example from the animal world is H. Volkelt's spider which did not even look at a fly deposited in its corner but instead fled from it. The spider proved that for it there was no such objective concept as "fly-for-eating," but that its feeding reaction was instead tuned to vibrations of a particular strength in its web.<sup>21</sup> The research about shape and similar qualities has yielded quite a number of other observations which are important for an understanding of the eidetic image.

In addition we must consider the following to understand the problem: eidetic images are formed not only by objects within the compass of a perception, but often a complex of ideas is given form within a picture whose components derive from various sense perceptions and, on top of that, often contain purely abstract conceptual elements. How can these components arrange themselves into an eidetic image in which the essential parts of the conceptual complexes are realized? A painter may be stirred by the experience of "a hot, clear summer day." The eidetic image of this experience is composed primarily of a motley confusion of strong colors of quite specific selection, dominated by greens with colored spots, yellows, and blues, while the rusty browns of autumn will surely be absent. Furthermore, glaringly radiant light is essential. On the other hand, it is relatively unimportant which real objects are included, be they a mountain peak, a pastoral valley, or a meadow. Much more important is the renunciation of components from other perceptual spheres, like heat, the buzzing of insects, etc. Everything now depends on whether the formed components in the eidetic image suggest the theme powerfully enough that they bring the others to mind by association. The implied components therefore coalesce around a very few pictorial ingredients, while the concrete elements such as houses, trees, or persons have the tendency to attract attention to themselves and to alter the eidetic image into a comprehensible conception, a knowledge about objects. The eidetic image is made most intense not by the addition of all the parts to be found in memory but through the selection and hierarchical arrangement of the visually most important.

Real objects can be formed representationally in very different ways and yet, as soon as any copying tendency even begins to stir, it becomes a matter of transposing an eidetic image into spatial and tangible form. The basic psychic process remains the same, and

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<sup>21</sup> Hans Volkelt, *Über die Vorstellungen der Tiere*, Leipzig, 1914, a work which is remarkable not just for its results but also for its careful and deliberate method in the psychological interpretation of the observations.

all stylistic formal peculiarities are secondary. Psychologically speaking they concern only the attitude of the author to his object, which oscillates between the narrowest realism (naturalism and domination by the material) and the broadest unrealism (abstraction and domination by the formal). From one pole to the other there exist only gradations, not contradictions, as a short investigation will prove. The most complete realism is achieved only when a duplicate is made out of the same material, as for instance in the reproduction of a polished jewel, a piece of embroidery, or a model of a house or ship. Next closest are the deceptive imitations of moulages, dolls, hideous clay and tin dwarfs and deer, and wax figures and panoramas. Not far removed is the naive naturalism of many amateur paintings; folk art in contrast shows considerable achievements, mostly because of the binding formal force of deeply rooted traditions. Conscious artistic naturalism already transfers the accent to the configurative process, regardless of how dependent it remains on the real object. Detail is sacrificed to achieve a uniform effect, and selection and abstraction occurs. Beyond that, there are various tendencies which indeed remain attached to recognizable pictures of nature but consciously superimpose the eidetic image of the author. The man whose picture is painted may appear as a soldier, like Rembrandt's brother with the gold helmet, be idealized into a divine figure, or be stylized into an ancient magician, like Kokoschka's Forel. We find the vast mass of European art and a large part of the rest somewhere between the extremes. Conventions establish themselves in the style of an age and the outstanding personalities impose their formal points of view on hordes of successors. Custom oscillates across a wide area between formal regularity and naturalism.

Finally there remains a vast and curiously mixed group of highly different pictures: those from early cultures, from primitives in all parts of the world, from prehistoric peoples, and from children. Whatever one may say against combining all of them in one group, all of these pictures are differentiated from all the others by their configurative style. Real objects are no doubt also intended to be represented in them, whether in the ancestor effigies, the fetishes or idols, the outlined figures and vessels, or the scribbled, simple line figures by children. Neither can we doubt, however, that psychologically the authors of all these stylized, often "false," figures proceed basically the same way as all other artists: they too must already have formed their inner eidetic image before they attempt to develop it physically. How their visual perception affects it is another question which must be answered differently in each individual case. Their eidetic image is determined, as always, by their degree of culture, their age, their expertise, etc. In the case of the child the eidetic image is undeveloped and lacking in relationships; in the case of the primitive and especially in early cultures it is bound by magical religious traditions.

A study of physical action in pictorial representation would be especially enlightening because, in contrast to the other traditions of aesthetics, it can be objectively investigated. That becomes clear when we try to realize the possibilities inherent in the reproduction of movement. Anyone can lay out on a table, next to the picture of a running man, matches also forming a little man in running position. If he is in proportion and the position of his limbs is good, he will always convey the impression of movement far more convincingly than the picture of the full-bodied runner. If we wanted to test to what degree the eidetic image of the movement of a running man is present in a person it would make little sense to let him draw such a man. We would thereby divert his attention away from the essential and toward the marginal detail, which is a mixture of image and concept and which would become an obstruction. Instead, the running figure should be laid out with pieces of wood, if possible of a predetermined length.

The chimera of organic correctness and completeness, particularly in pictures of the human body, has done a great deal of harm despite its ancestry in Leonardo da Vinci and Dürer because it corresponds to the pedantic tendencies of liberal rationalism. We maintain that great areas of configuration remain free of it and shift the accent from objective representation to very different components, without thereby leaving themselves open to criticism. The eidetic image is always strongest in the most accentuated component, and it is important to follow that eidetic image back each time to its determining factors.

There can no longer be any doubt that when it comes to objective representation there exists only a simple polarity between a more materially bound proximity to nature and a more abstract and formal remoteness from nature, while there is only the one psychological fact: out of the chaos of the object, configuration produces an eidetic image, from which in turn continued configuration produces an effigy. It is plainly impossible to differentiate psychologically between two separate configurative processes – a physioplastic one which sticks to nature, and an ideoplastic one which adheres to conception and knowledge.<sup>22</sup>

So far we have taken a purely psychological approach in speaking of a configurative process which characteristically repeats itself regularly, whether in a drawing child, a painter or sculptor of any era, or an Australian aborigine. Now we shall nevertheless have to look around for a value scale or at least for perspectives by which we might possibly discriminate. The laconic judgment frequently made by artists that a work is “good” or “bad” will not do us much good because its standard always belongs to a certain milieu in which at any given time certain works are automatically found to be good or bad. An aesthetic evaluation on a broader basis which does not presume to hand down dogmatic dictates extends into at least four directions when we deal with the representation of a real object. It judges specifically whether, first, a definitely conceived object is, secondly, personally composed in such a manner that, thirdly, it conforms to reality and, fourthly, is technically good. Nevertheless, whatever we may add to each of these points, we will hardly meet the real relative center of all value judgment. Briefly, that seems to rest in only one polarity; every configuration is stretched taut between lively immediacy and artistic formation, and our value judgment can in the final analysis depend only on the degree of the tension. We can easily convince ourselves that that is how judgments have always been arrived at, whether openly or implicitly.

No matter how little we have to rely on artistic critical value judgments in analyzing our material we must nevertheless consider that they inevitably enter into the simplest description, which is why a very few must be briefly mentioned: that element which makes one picture among others more forceful we shall call the power of configuration of the originator, which means his ability to translate whatever moves him – whether an eidetic image or a mood – into a picture in such a way that a qualified viewer may participate in the experience as closely as possible. The configurative power therefore has its roots in the total psychic realm of life, insofar as it emits expressive impulses. It bridges the gap from any expressive need across eidetic images to the work – or between

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<sup>22</sup> It is necessary to emphasize this especially in view of the strong effect which Max Verworn's brief writings exert (*Die Anfänge der Kunst*, 1909, *Ideoplastische Kunst*, 1914; *Zur Psychologie der Primitiven Kunst*, 2d ed., 1917). The suggestive effect of every division of areas which are hard to survey all too quickly leads to an exploitation of such divisions. The concepts “ideoplastic-physioplastic” surely denote a polar contradiction, but only with the stipulation that psychologically a single basic process takes place. The very graphic and well illustrated writings of Verworn are, because of their simplicity, especially seductive for beginners, and cause them to accept an all too comfortable schematism.

experience and form. Its highest achievement is to fill form with so much expressive content that that tension is increased in which we saw the very height of value of a work. We must emphasize that we do not mean an affective, visible tension in the object of the representation. Tension in our sense can be dominating in the most sober realism, as Hodler's figures prove. On the other hand, configurative power has little in common with technical ability and is often missing in the presence of great virtuosity. The reason is closely related to our formulation: it is precisely the polar tension between expressive content and form which is resolved by virtuosity in favor of form. On the other hand, the configurative power is easily underestimated when there is a lack of skill.

Finally we must think of a way to state the central formal polarity which applies to all art, but is easily forgotten in the graphic arts. Every form is determined by two instances – by a picture or model and by a rule – or it drifts between its function as a copy and its rhythm. Whether the various branches of art belong more to one pole or the other (music and dance to the rhythmical, graphic art and epic poetry more to the imitative), no work which has somehow been formed lacks the vitality of rhythm. When we say that the degree of rhythmical vitality of a work determines its ranking as a configuration, we use basically the same standard of measurement from which we deduced the tension between expressive content and form. That we must distinguish between rhythm and rules (or cadence) has been sufficiently emphasized elsewhere.

## THE PICTURES

## I. Psychiatric Foreword

The introduction provided some general information about the Heidelberg collection. We have yet to report on the arrangement of the material according to psychiatric interests and to give reasons for our choice of pictures for this investigation. The majority of the pictures (about 75 percent) originate with patients who are schizophrenics.<sup>23</sup> The remaining 25 percent are divided as follows: by manic-depressive patients, 7 to 8 percent; by psychopathic patients, 5 to 6 percent; by paralytics, 4 percent; by imbeciles, 4 to 5 percent; and by epileptics, 3 to 4 percent. We cannot arrive at very precise figures because many diagnoses are lacking and others are very uncertain. Women drew 16 percent of the pictures. The rest of the statistical questions will be reserved for a special study. The present study concerns the psychological foundations.

The schizophrenic group is proportionally dominant, and its artistic qualities attract the observer so powerfully by their variety, charm, and abundance that the rest are used only for comparison. We emphasize especially that unprejudiced observers are impressed because nowadays the psychology of schizophrenia is almost necessarily closest to the

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<sup>23</sup> We have to refrain from taking a position on the unresolved problems of schizophrenia. Let this much be said for nonpsychiatrists: after Kraepelin had distinguished — from the multitude of mental illnesses for which we do not yet know the physiological bases — the groups of manic-depressive confusions and *dementia praecox*, the latter attracted ever more interest. Efforts were increasingly made to understand the processes instead of, as before, describing the conditions, which led to the recognition of more and more psychologically comprehensible relationships. Under Freud's influence Bleuler then established the psychologically conceptualized definition of schizophrenia for the *dementia praecox* group. With this word (meaning split brain or brain split) the various split symptoms are connoted which are never lacking. Although at first "schizophrenia" was used synonymously with "*dementia praecox*," that is, as a purely pathological concept, it was diluted psychologically in the course of the years until most recently the concept of the "schizoid type" was elucidated purely constitutionally — characterologically by Kretschmer, among others. A reorientation of all questions relating to schizophrenia is currently underway. On the one hand, there are the efforts to comprehend psychologically as many behavior patterns of the patients as possible, which increasingly involves the use of comparisons. In other words, we have learned to understand quite well the manifestations which formerly were always considered pathological symptoms by making comparisons with similar behavior patterns in primitives, children, and adults (especially in the presence of unusual talents or under exceptional circumstances). We are increasingly able to point up the psychic conditions which have to be present for a certain behavioral pattern, by which

psychiatrist's heart. Under the circumstances, making schizophrenic art the center of the investigation was natural and made the definition of the problem easier as well. Although we shall occasionally introduce drawings by nonschizophrenics, especially simple scribbles in which configurative tendencies can be elucidated, the psychopathological interest of the investigation lies exclusively in the "schizophrenic outlook."

Every psychiatrist knows that this vague expression is a painful expediency but that it has its justification in the variety of schizophrenic symptoms. We shall therefore not compile a list of individual symptoms and then search for them sequentially in the pictures; we simply wish to keep in mind the basic psychological traits considered typical of schizophrenics. Let us summarize them here briefly, with special regard for psychiatrically unprepared readers, who incidentally will have the opportunity to learn about individual symptoms from the 10 cases we will discuss in detail.

The central psychological phenomenon of schizophrenia is still best characterized by the word "autism," although it has unfortunately been abused by its inventor himself by being applied to not necessarily abnormal eccentricities, such as self-glorification or quaintness. The word "introversion" has also undergone a similar change from psychopathologic to descriptive usage. We take this change as evidence that functional peculiarities which at first seemed to be peculiar to the ill mind can appear plentifully in psychologically normal persons if only we are sensitive to them. With the ill mind it is never a matter of single symptoms but of a change in the total pattern of habits and above all in the relation to the environment and the view of the world. Schizophrenic autism is peculiar in that it cannot be influenced, that it is not open to objective considerations. The moment it is receptive to objective considerations it must be considered broken, if not surmounted. We must strongly emphasize that autism can occur not merely in the presence of intact psychological functions (recognition, memory, and logical cohesion) but that these functions' intactness is in fact essential to it. Autism merely means that psychic processes which are undisturbed in their mechanical functions have become subject to the arbitrary regimen of an overbearing ego which has become independent of the outside world; autism's most important result is that the customary distinction between "real" and "unreal" is dropped and subordinated to the ego. The ego deals freely with all experiences, be they sense impressions, ideas, memories, dreams, hallucinations, or thought combinations. All of them are considered real when the ego, an autocrat responsible to no one, wills it. The compulsively experienced feeling of self-importance gives rise to what we call megalomania: a feeling of grace, of having a mission, of saving the world, of being a prince, Christ, or God. From this self-importance there springs also the desire to have an active effect on one's environment, to change it with magic according to one's desires. At the same time a critical evaluation of any actual success will not even be considered because that would lead from the autistic world to the real. So the schizophrenic builds

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we simultaneously increase our own abilities to accept attitudes which are consciously extirpated from our rational, purposeful mode of thought by the development of civilization. It is clear that such efforts obscure the limits of every concept of illness because they aim at discovering the common elements of all psychic events. They therefore will necessarily lead to a dissolution of fixed definitions of illness and always threaten to dissolve in general humanitarian tendencies. They are opposed on the other side by efforts to delimit real illnesses, which strictly speaking can be possible only on the basis of physical symptoms. Indeed, from this clinical-systematic point of view the purely psychological research easily appears as an aberration. For our problems, after we had recognized that the diagnostic as well as the psychopathological definition of the problem could not do our material justice, only a purely psychological investigation could be considered. Let us emphasize once more that we have excluded every differentiating diagnostic consideration because it would only complicate the subject without contributing any corresponding insights. Such special investigations can easily be conducted later with the use of the large amount of material we have.

his own world in complete loneliness, turned totally inward, out of compulsive inspiration and unrestrained arbitrariness. We could define "autism" as a psychic cramp.

The autistic, self-important schizophrenic of course creates for himself an entirely different, richer world out of the sense data of his environment which, according to our discussions, are already subject to transformation during the act of perception and become personally determined eidetic images, a world whose reality he does not establish for himself by logical conventions or reconciles with the impressions of others but which for him remains raw material for his inspirations, his arbitrariness, and his needs. The real world as such is devalued and does not compel any recognition; one can use it or switch it off as one desires.

While the attitude of the schizophrenic to his surroundings, his rejection of them, and his turning in upon himself are not difficult to describe, his affective behavior cannot easily be reduced to simple formulas. On the one hand, it parallels the milieu: external objects are no longer what they were, but they are not simply devalued; they are instead available for any valuation which might result from a change of feeling – that is the meaning of "affective ambivalence." Unexpected eruptions following negligible provocation have led to the crude metaphor of a "damming up of feeling," which is opposed to a lameness of the emotions as the other side of the affective change. Any observer will notice immediately that it is impossible to establish emotional contact with a schizophrenic. Inadequate emotional expression is commonplace: the patient, smiling and friendly, for instance, reports enormities and immediately thereafter falls into a fit of rage over a proffered hand. At any rate, the strangest and psychologically least understandable changes occur in the emotional sphere.

The symptoms mentioned in the preceding paragraphs, which indicate an internal split, have gained the title "schizophrenia." Emotional ambivalence is a part of it: it is as if two persons found themselves in different emotional relationships with the same object, and yet both emotional experiences occur within one man. Or the same object is perceived and used in very different ways so that it remains logically incomprehensible why one conception does not necessarily exclude the other. Persons are also treated ambivalently. The physician may be greeted as if he were the mailman. And what seems most split is the sick person himself who at one moment as God rules the world and the next, as a patient, sweeps the room.

What has been called "associative loosening" is, psychologically, probably only a derivative symptom due to the aforementioned basic traits. External things are disposed of freely, either playfully according to inspiration or under the single direction of psychic "complexes" with emotional overtones. All of us have similar experiences in our dreams for which freedom from direction by a compulsive super-concept is certainly essential. In any case it is not at all difficult to achieve through practice a similar loosening of associations while we are awake. The free association of ideas which belongs to psychoanalysis leads in the same direction. But it is true that in these comparable cases we are dealing with temporary psychic states which, except in dreams, can be deliberately induced, whereas the schizophrenic loosening of associations occurs necessarily and is almost impervious to change, finally becoming a permanent condition which lasts as long as the primary autistic change of the personality lasts.

The central fact of the autistic change of the personality is its changed relation to the ego and the external world; the change coincides with deep disturbances of the affective behavior, leads to ruptures in several psychic spheres, and usually occurs as a result of delusions and exceptional experiences, especially sensibly perceived hallucinations or phy-

sical sensations which are accompanied by excitement. If the illness continues, the confusion or madness becomes a "dissolution of the personality," which leads into the permanent "schizophrenic final state." The "moronization" meant by the earlier diagnostic term *dementia praecox* is entirely different from the organic dementia due to great brain diseases; for that reason the term pseudo-dementia has been used. We rarely have access to the psyche of the strongly confused final state, but the pictures to which we now turn offer us such access.

## *II. Unobjective, Unordered Scribbles*

We observe that many patients who are writing letters do not carry out their intention to give news about themselves to relatives and friends but fill their sheets of paper with seemingly senseless scribbles. We find furthermore that periodicals, newspapers, and whatever else the patient finds in the way of printed and plain paper is covered with disordered scribbles. A staff physician who values orderliness and has trained his personnel well will perhaps see this kind of material much less frequently than it is produced because it is thrown out. Interest is usually aroused only when the patient writes or draws reasonably sensibly. Just the same one sometimes finds sheets of paper preserved in patients' histories which lack all rational sense. Here we shall look briefly at such artifacts, which are generally destroyed and survive only in minor fragments, evidence of the most tedious play with paper and pencil.

One can easily arrange a few dozen of these unattractive doodles along a qualitatively ascending scale even though they all share one basic trait, that of being "unobjective scribbling." The drawings at one end of the scale would be characterized by the complete disorder of their lines, their opacity, the chaos of pencil tracings, none of which give the viewer a clue as to what caused them. On some pages the confusion is not totally opaque. Occasional points are emphasized by distinctive curves, points, or straight lines. Other sheets, not smeared by wiping, offer a confusion of lines "scribbled" in the truest sense – and with a hard pencil; they afford us greater insight. Here a single letter of the alphabet, there a syllable or a word can be discerned by the straining eye, or again numbers, fragments of geometric curves, points, and parallel lines. But this scriptural detritus never forms even the simplest picture, word, or figure, and the distribution of lighter and darker places or single lines never suggests in its totality that we should find intention or regularity in it.

Nevertheless, although no beginning has been made in the direction of representation or of order which would give a sheet some individuality we cannot by any means speak of complete evenness, even if the total impression is one of a lack of structure. It is instead rather simple to find, with a minimal investment in time and trouble, an expressive language in this apparently noncommunicative mess which disposes of a not inconsiderable scale of nuances. Even the smallest loop and even more the sweeping curve can be understood as an expressive gesture and interpreted, if only to a small extent. Although we know of little usable research it is not hopeless to try to establish a kind of alphabet of expressive movements or gestures by comparing numerous well observed cases. From such a comparison the limited practical value of such a study can also easily be demonstrated: like the basic scribble the basic spoken sound is due simply to a constellation of muscles, a motor stimulation of the nerves, in short, the dynamics of a physiologic process.

In spite of its recognizable origins, however, the resultant sound has no conceptual meaning in itself but can only be the bearer of expression and only then perhaps have an unambiguous meaning, especially an emotional one (e. g. a cry of pain). Among other problems we should therefore investigate whether very rangy zigzag lines regularly correspond to a mood or character trait of their creator. Unfortunately there is almost no comparative material from healthy people available, and only material which appeared spontaneously would be valuable. It is not true that the illness of the drawer generally cancels the validity of the material. When so little material is available we must accept that small degree of uncertainty whether the anger of a schizophrenic can be compared with the anger of a healthy person. On the other hand, physiological motor impulses must be evaluated differently and tested separately, although if possible also in spontaneous creations.<sup>24</sup>

Only after the preliminary work has been completed can we discuss further the “meaning” of simple curves and form elements; symbolic interpretation of simple scribbles, which has been tried several times, must then be given especially critical attention. Nobody



Case 165

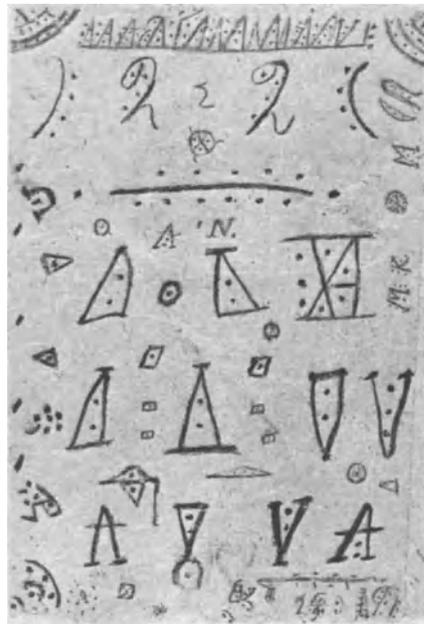


Fig. 1 a and 1 b. Scribbles (Pencil).

Each 14 × 21 cm.

with any experience of the subject can doubt that the most valuable material awaits thoughtful investigation. It is part of the extraordinary delicacy and ephemeral quality of the problems that so far so little of substance has been learned about them. In order to avoid subjective interpretations which cannot be empirically supported we refuse to treat our simple drawings as mirrors of personalities, but we shall try to turn the more complicated pictures of our ten major cases into just such mirrors.

<sup>24</sup> The methodology of graphology elucidated by Ludwig Klages (see his *Handschrift und Charakter*, 4th ed., Leipzig, 1921) and his theoretical foundations of the theory of expression provide a solid base for any investigation, which would of course require a great deal of patience and critical judgment. Also applicable is Kröttsch's book, *Rhythmus und Form*, which we have mentioned already, the work of Mohr, and, for the manifestations of organically determined writing disturbances, Erlenmeyer, *Die Schrift, Grundzüge ihrer Physiologie und Pathologie*, Stuttgart, 1879; Köster, *Die Schrift bei Geisteskranken*, Leipzig, 1903; and Rogues de Fursac, *Les Ecrits et les Dessins dans les maladies nerveuses et mentales*, Paris, 1905.

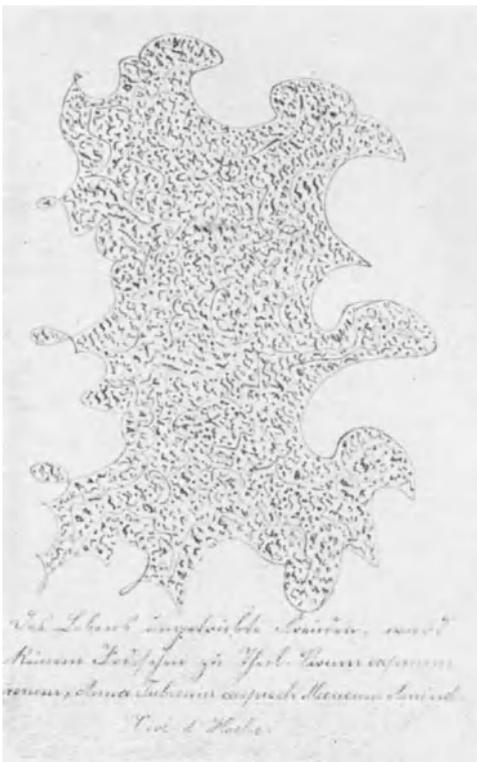
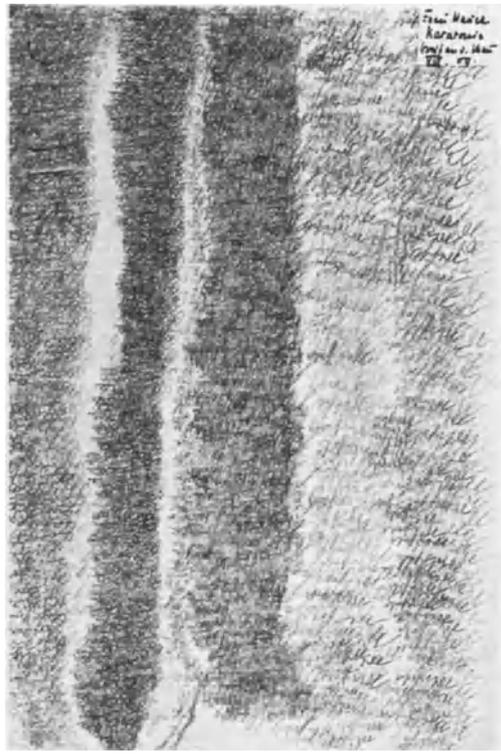
Here we limit ourselves to giving an overview of the variety of our material while putting the accent on clarifying the configurative tendencies and their various effects, *i. e.* on the super-personal components of the configurative process. In their cooperation we shall be able to trace some disturbances which can surely be interpreted psychologically.

Figures 1 a and 2 a provide examples of the simplest scribbles. The individual lines remind us most often of alphabetic forms or sometimes geometric figures, without perceivable intentions. The distribution of the forms on the sheets does not show the presence of any ordering tendency. One single feature common to such scribbles can be named: whole sheets are filled with scribbles to the very edge as if a *horror vacui* gave the drawer no rest until every empty place was covered or, more positively, as if every empty space spurred the drawer into activity. We call this unobjective, unordered scribbling, and see in it a progenital form of drawing which is important for any theoretical evaluation and which, so to speak, is nearest to the zero point on the scale of composition.

If we ask ourselves about the psychological contents of such scribbles we have to indicate three aspects as essential. Even the simplest scribble, as we emphasized repeatedly, is, as a manifestation of expressive gestures, the bearer of psychic components, and the whole sphere of psychic life lies as if in perspective behind the most insignificant form element. We can call the impulse for the drawing gesture specifically the expressive need (see p. 12). Beyond that we must speak of an activating impulse which we also consider a basic fact of all life and which we distinguish from the expressive need despite their close relationship. Finally, we become conscious of the tendency to enrich the environment even in describing the first sheets.

In the aforementioned three tendencies we see the determining components of a configurative drive which is not yet directed toward any kind of real, formal, or symbolic object. One could deduce a "desire to draw" from the configurative drive, blind though it may yet be, a readiness to keep busy with pencil and paper or a positive "attitude" to them; in any case we now have probably fully delineated the main phases of unobjective, unordered scribbling.

Figures 2 a-c and 1 b represent the decisive step in drawing beyond the most basic. The innovation lies in the fact that the elements are no longer distributed evenly across the sheet but collect themselves into dark points and bands in Figures 2 a and b, and assume firm shape in Figures 1 b and 2 d, while arranging themselves on the sheet regularly no matter how primitive their individual forms. We have therefore recognized an ordering tendency in these scribbles and find that they manifest the basic composing principles: rows of lines, regular alternation, and symmetry. Figure 1 b should be considered an archetype of ornamentation; Figures 2 a and 2 b, archetypes of decoration. Figure 3, in which scriptural elements predominate, is very different. In it real objects appear directly in a confusion of lines which are not at all decoratively ordered. No pictorial relationship can be found even between the pictured objects, the head with the cap, and the small house at its corner; their combination makes no sense. The two motifs seem to have entered into the conceptual process independently of one another, simply demanding to be represented on the sheet of paper. If the composing tendency in the first group of pictures was directed purely toward order and was without any secondary copying intention, here, on the contrary, it is directed solely toward the reproduction of individual objects, without any intention of order, yet both are still within the definition of the simplest scribbling. We now follow the two directions separately in order to outline roughly the range of effect of some drawings typical of each. We arrange the two sets in such a way that we proceed from the more playful works of little content to the more complex



Case 216

Fig. 2a – d. Scribbles (Pencil).

Each 10 × 16 cm.

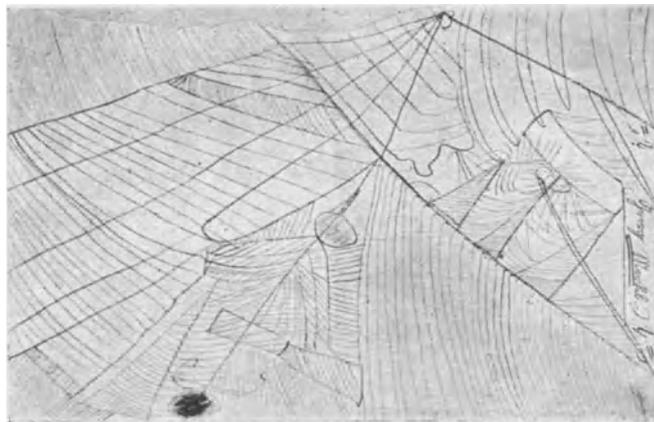
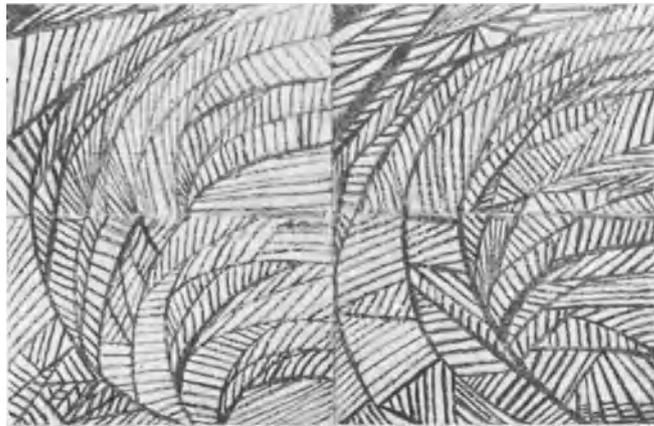


Case 231 **Fig. 3.** Scribbles (Pen). 16 × 21 cm.

ones in which certain tangible inspirations, such as limited complex conceptualizations, desires, or experiences, have led to the choice of motifs.

### *III. Playful Drawings with a Predominant Ordering Tendency (Ornamentation and Decoration)*

Among ordering tendencies we distinguished the free rhythmic uniformity of movement of single lines from the formal rules applying to individual objects (ornaments) and the division of a plane surface (decoration). The former is shown most simply and perhaps impressively in Figure 4 a, in which two gesture motifs, the curve resembling a circle and the straight parallels used in ordering the interspaces, constitute the whole fund of forms. These motifs are executed completely playfully, without any planning, from one edge to the other, and create a uniform total impression only by their regularity. Figure 5, with its flourishing forms resembling daisies or corals, originated similarly except that here the rhythm of every gesture produced individual pictures complete in themselves. We see an expression of tense excitement in the strong energetic curves, particularly if we compare this figure with the bizarrely playful images by another patient, those of Figures 2 c and 2 d. Indeed, this man has for years produced numberless arabesques of this kind almost automatically. A certain lameness in the cohesion of the whole overcomes the first impression of richness, especially in his larger drawings, such as Figure 6. A few motifs repeated for years, reminiscent of seashells, go counter to the whole

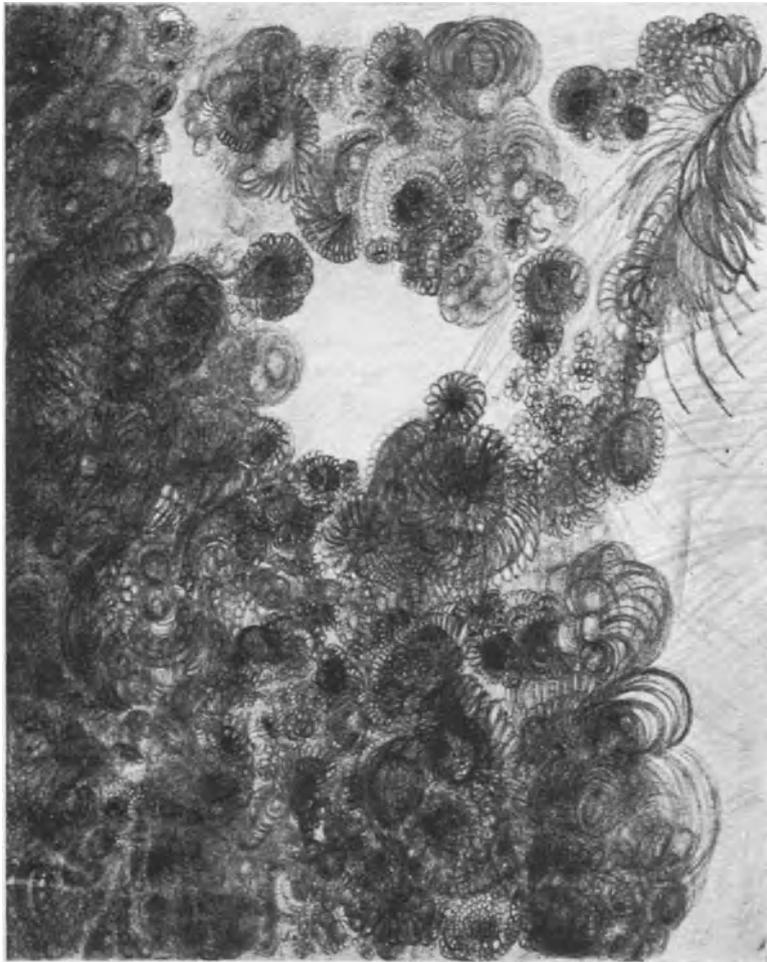


Cases 267 and 441

**Fig. 4a and b.** Decorative Scribbles  
(Pencil). Each 32 × 21 cm.

composition. The edge is often attentively treated as a frame; in contrast the division of the main area is determined by a capricious arbitrariness, in which no rule of order or real object plays any role.

Figure 7 cannot be dissected as easily into its components because it is anchored in two directions: within its squares geometric figures are constructed by means of diagonals and lines connecting the centers of the squares; they provide the scaffold for the curves and the colorfully executed areas. The curves are not at all geometrically regular, however, but evince a confusing mixture of rules and arbitrariness, a mixture which probably accounts for the simultaneously finished and yet disquieting effect of the sheet. The color distribution also contributes to the ambiguous impression because it sometimes appears with a demand for regular interpretation and then again seems to follow playful inspiration. Something of the sort can also be said of the much more primitive drawing, Figure 4b, whose main lines appear to receive their order from a point lying at the edge, while in reality most of the fragmentary forms are quite independent of it. Whether the drawer, a congenitally imbecilic schizophrenic, really intended to draw a house from the very beginning, as he afterward reported, can no longer be determined because of the playful interpretative impulses of patients like him. It is remarkable just the same that such an apparently abstract decorative drawing can under certain circumstances denote real objects. In this case two conceptual complexes not at all reconcilable to our



Case 195      **Fig. 5.** Ornamental Drawing (Pencil).      16 × 21 cm.

minds are combined by the schizophrenic: the eidetic image of a house, which hardly differs fundamentally from an average house, on the one hand, and on the other, the abstract drawing. In a few cases we can easily follow how, in highly complicated drawings resembling maps, a certain significance is consistently ascribed to every detail. Not just eidetic images but whole scenes, and, additionally, important experiences, are secreted into incoherent scribbles. It may nevertheless be too early to speak of symbolism.

Figure 8 is marked by dull, mechanical repetition of only a few motifs. The patient whose work it is has filled numerous thick notebooks with patterns like these, manifesting the psychopathologic concept of stereotypy in an unsurpassed way. He comes from a region dominated by the embroidery industry and his patterns undoubtedly show the effects of remembered images. The logical dissolution of symmetry in most of the details is peculiar and gives the whole a swaying effect despite the quite pedantic repetition of the long rows. An embroidery firm told us upon request that the designs were not suitable for machine work despite their close resemblance to the most common patterns.

Simple natural forms like leaves or trees can, given symmetric order, easily be made to have a modest decorative effect; we know of numerous examples, of which Figure 9 is particularly bizarre. In it the outlines of the utensils of daily life are ordered together



Case 216

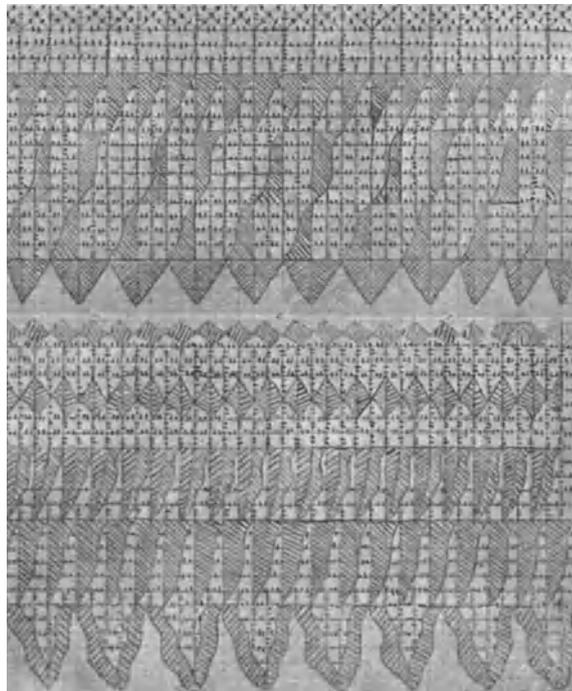
**Fig. 6.**Decorative Drawing (Pencil).

24 × 37 cm.

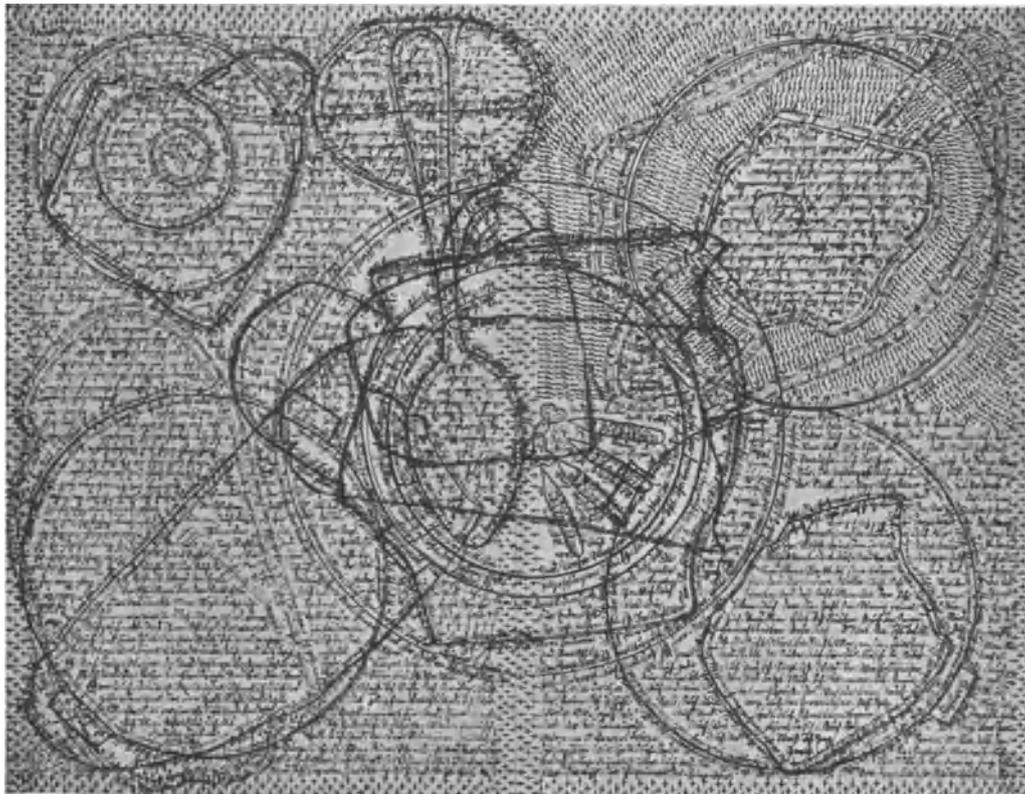
around the center without regard to overlaps, and within a confusion of words and numerals: plates, spoons, cups, a can, slices of bread, feathers, coins, etc. The outlines of the objects were apparently created first because they are accompanied by inscriptions, and



Case 187 **Fig. 7.** Decorative Drawing (Pencil and crayon). 19 × 19 cm.



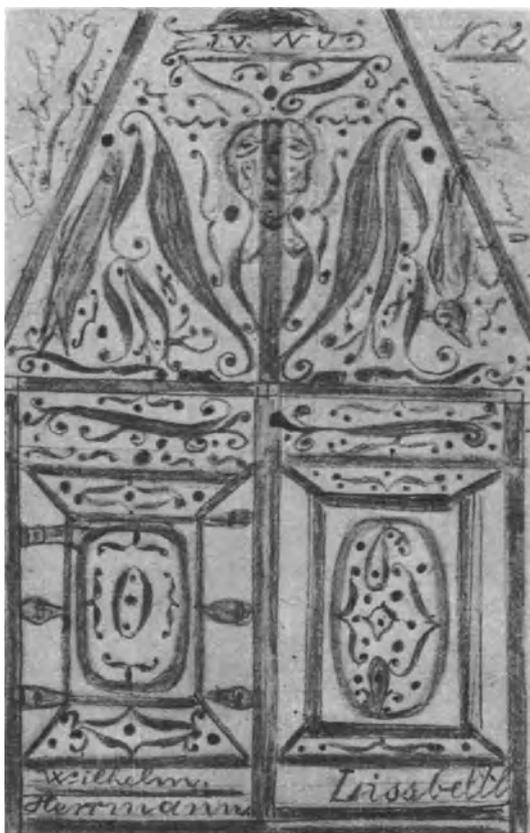
Case 114. **Fig. 8.** Ornament (Pencil). 9 × 15 cm.



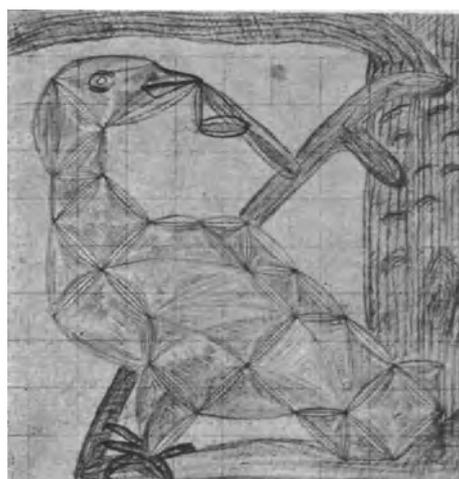
Case 164

**Fig. 9.** Decorative Play (Ink).

43 × 32 cm.



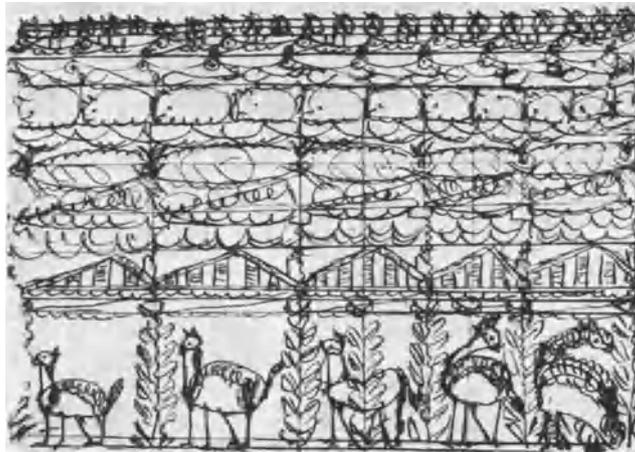
Case 218 **Fig. 10.** 10 × 16 cm.  
Decorative Drawing, Intended Realistically  
(Pencil).



Case 187 **Fig. 11** 19 × 19 cm.  
Decorative Drawing (Pencil).

the perpendicular lines of script are limited to the interstices, a few of them filled with innumerable repetitions of the numeral "1." The edges bear three rows of crosses, even the edges lying next to the fold of the legal size sheet, where they can hardly have a framing effect. The fold therefore affected the drawer suggestively so that with senseless logic he repeated his cross motif across the middle of his sheet as well. The mixture of drawing and script occurs particularly frequently in our material (see also Figures 3, 9, and 21). Very characteristic is the use of objective forms: they are playfully incorporated into the drawing as outlines without regard to realism or upright position. It is surprising that real objects are also represented in Figure 10, which at first seems to be a purely decorative design, perhaps for a cast iron fence, but the inscription proves conclusively that at the bottom of the drawing two children's beds are meant (apparently in their top view) and at the top a wardrobe. The objective parts of Figure 11 seem to have resulted more from playful construing and interpretation. The bird resembling an eagle, which achieves an almost monumental effect, might have developed quite accidentally out of the strong connecting curves which almost seem to be magnetic fields.

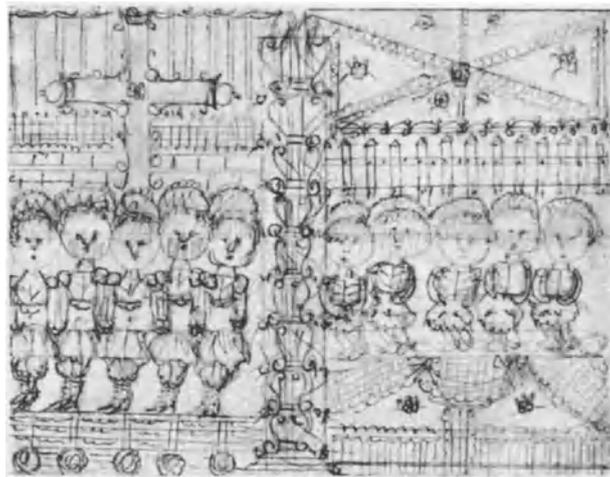
Richer and livelier in form languages are Figures 12 and 13 which, like most of the drawings by the same patient, who was in a highly perverse final schizophrenic condition, are scribbled on toilet paper. With great lightness of strokes he combines the tendency to stylized repetition, an explicit sense for dividing the surface, and modest variations



Case 123 **Fig. 12.** Decorative Drawing (Ink). 17 × 12 cm.

on the same motif. The animal repeated five times in Figure 12 is therefore changed slightly in each version, the perpendicular lines becoming narrower toward the right. Nonobjective conceptual complexes seem to have played a greater role in Figure 13 than in the drawings examined so far. The patient calls this drawing “Madonna Soldiers.” In fact he seems to have intended feminine figures with halos, over whom the cross stands at the left. The canopy bed in the lower right corner was explained by the patient with a secretive expression on his face: “And lead us not into temptation.”

The mysterious magic which emanates from Figure 14 is very hard to analyze. Strongly colored forms whose exotic splendor reminds us of flowers and colored pebbles are mixed in an irregular, intricate maze, although no single form becomes recognizable as a real object. The almost realistically executed head therefore seems all the more strange in this abstract, kaleidoscopic game. Everything other than the head is ambiguous and rationally incomprehensible. We can also find no unifying element other than the ruthlessly dominating color and the dominant sharp angles of the individual forms which we would call rhythmic. There is a unity in this semichaotic structure which cannot be reduced



Case 123 **Fig. 13.** “Madonna Soldiers” (Pencil). 10 × 7 cm.



31 × 23 cm.

**Fig. 14.** Abstract-decorative Play (Crayon).



Case 182

**Fig. 15.**  
Figure Scribble (Pencil).

17 × 20 cm.

to a familiar set of rules but springs from the arbitrariness of a personality liberated from some restraint. Perhaps the absence of such a restraint explains the disquieting feeling which refuses to disappear even in the presence of relative pictorial unity.

#### *IV. Playful Drawings with a Predominant Copying Tendency*

We defined “ordering tendency” as an inclination toward abstract rules of order which were not based on the form elements of a picture. Accordingly the copying tendency is understood as a general inclination toward eidetic images (conceptualizations or ideas) which the viewer can recover from their representations. Nothing is implied here about the kind of representation. We are dealing with a purely psychological concept, which we discussed at greater length on p. 24.

Numerous drawings of the sort seen in Figures 15 and 16 follow the scribbles of Figure 3 with its fragments of real objects. Half a torso, an arm, a foot, a child, two hats, and a few words and letters constitute the contents of one; a greater number of heads of various formats, between which a few arms become visible and, again, inscriptions, compose the motifs of the other. No pictorial cohesion or rule of order is intended. Each conception is thrown down on the paper as casually as it appears — *dissecta membra* in the full sense.



Case 159 **Fig. 16.** 10 × 12 cm.  
Heads (Pencil).

Quite crude representations of men and animals which often cannot be distinguished from children's drawings or the pitiful attempts of untrained adults and sometimes even primitives make up a large part of our material. Figure 17 and Figures 18a and 18b are examples, the first being the work of an imbecilic hardened criminal, the second that of an educated young hebephrenic, and the third that of an uneducated catatonic. The accompanying text by the last mentioned shows that the patient had accustomed herself to a childish mode of speech. Figure 19 is a typical example of the drawing method of an idiot, with its pedantic lining up of childishly conceived objects as in a picture book. Some realistic works stand out primarily because of the unusualness of the materials. The portrait of a woman, Figure 20, for instance, became a colorful relief resembling



Case 101 **Fig. 17.** Animals (Pencil). 28 × 18 cm.



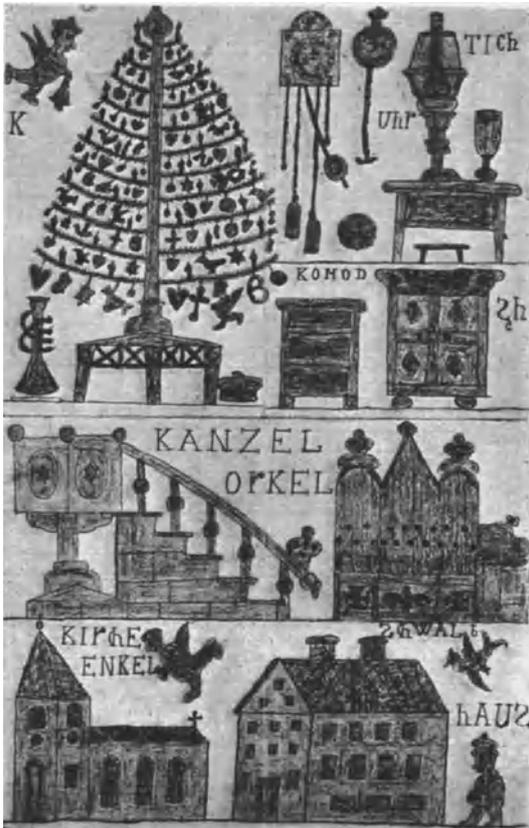
Case 431 **Fig. 18a.** 12 × 20 cm.  
Childish Figure (Crayon).



Case 75 **Fig. 18b.** 15 × 25 cm.  
Childish Figure (Pencil).

majolica; it used up ample quantities of whole cotton strands. The embroiderer who made it has also executed whole landscapes with gardens, streams, houses, merchants' booths, and people. Astonishing as it appears on first glance, one must not forget that she continues an old technique which has long been used in countries with a rich folk art tradition, like Sweden or Bohemia. Samples from those countries are retained by most handicraft museums. One patient achieved a very good effect by pasting colored plasticine on a sheet like oil paint.

The drawings of manics cannot always be easily distinguished from those of catatonics. The buoyant and disorderly strokes of Figure 21, which time and again follow the same outlines, would point directly to a diagnosis of mania, while the three subsequent ones are doubtful. Just the same, the timid, scribbly stroke of Figure 22 occurs particularly frequently in the work of manics, and the masks (Figure 23), which are "copied" from a periodical, are also not unusual (compare the case of Beil, p. 188ff.). It would seem reasonable to try to analyze the differences between this drawing and that of the head (Figure 24) done by a female schizophrenic, but the personalities of the drawers are too different. The manic was an uneducated laborer, the schizophrenic a cultured lady who, as an amateur, possessed some skill. After more protracted viewing the observer will feel, in the tense stiffness of the head by the schizophrenic, which is painted relatively lightly in watercolors, a component pointing toward an intentionally emphasized alien experience. On the other hand, accidental effects determine the "expression" of the heads by the manic, who plunges unrestrainedly and awkwardly into his work. A head by an uneducated female schizophrenic (Figure 25), in contrast, has a surprisingly pictorial



Case 85 **Fig. 19.** 22 × 33 cm.  
Childish Drawing (Crayon).



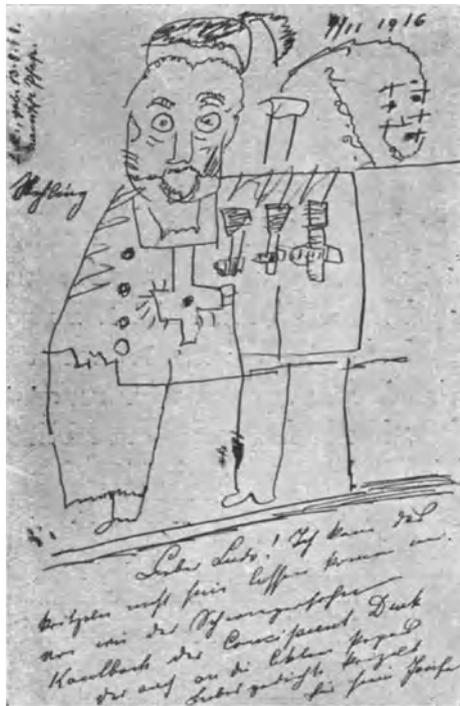
Case 6 **Fig. 20** 37 × 48 cm.  
Woman (Embroidery).

effect through the ingenuous simplification and the even filling in of the hair and body sections with loops.

Spatial order is a drawer's main problem in group pictures. We must be primarily concerned with whether the drawer had any kind of training in drawing, because the representation of space is above all a matter of schooling. Anybody who begins to draw



Case 156 **Fig. 21.** Scribble (Pencil). 21 × 33 cm.



Case 198 **Fig. 22.** 12 × 14 cm.  
Scribble, Letter (Ink).

naively, be he a child, a primitive, a normal adult, or a mentally ill person (always excepting the talented) will invariably use the sheet of paper as the basic plane of a planned scene and draw from a high-angled view, as in an isometric projection, without trying for real



Case 94 **Fig. 23.** Heads (Pencil). 21 × 17 cm.



Case 263                      **Fig. 24.**                      27 × 30 cm.  
Head (Water color).

perspective.<sup>25</sup> A characteristic example is Figure 26, in which four persons sit around a table whose surface, seen from above, lies there broadly while the pedestal appears to stand in profile on the bottom edge which represents the floor. On the other hand, the person sitting on the right has been folded back, and in the free space at the lower right we see three standing figures in corresponding positions, namely perpendicular to the pedestal. In this case, as well as that of all similar drawings, it would make little sense to talk about perspectives and views. The paper is simply turned according to the individual's preference, and every empty space is filled according to what seems most congenial.

Sometimes a certain system does in fact predominate, especially when skilled artisans draw scenes, as in the case of the dining room of the inn (Figure 27), whose walls seem to be neatly folded outward just like the guests sitting at the tables. This drawing comes from a schizophrenic carpenter. The same principles are applied right down to the finest details in the complex "Battle Around the Fortress Atschin in Sumatra" (Figure 28). The artist had participated in the battle as a Dutch colonial soldier and therefore describes his own experiences. The stars represent large plants resembling cacti. While we can find pictures from every early period of art as well as pictures from primitives which closely resemble the ones mentioned here in their spatial representation, we also occasionally meet with a picture having its origins in very definite historical methods of representation. Figure 29, for instance, corresponds exactly to reliefs of Egyptian pharaohs: the

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<sup>25</sup> Perspective is a favorite theme in the works about children's drawings and is discussed in every one of the well known books by Kerschensteiner, Levinstein, etc., sometimes with parallels to primitive art and the art of early cultures. Nevertheless we still lack a presentation of the problems of perspective which would treat without prejudice all possibilities and the objective meaning of the various solutions to the ever new task: to put down on a two-dimensional plane depictions of spatial objects and of the relationships between objects together with symbols of intangible experiences, and all this under the effects of different composing tendencies. The ideal of a "correct" perspective representation of a direct impression in a realistic way should be completely excluded. A discussion of it would lead us so far into theory that we cannot attempt it here even in outline.

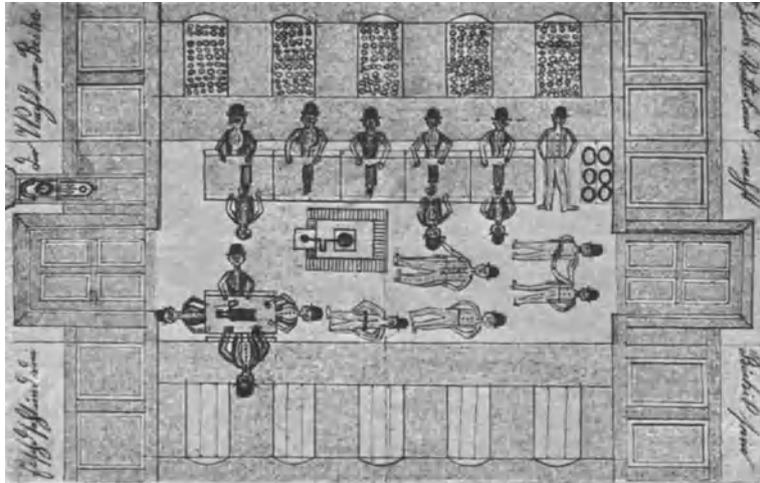


Case 326 **Fig. 25.** Head (Charcoal). 16 × 20 cm.

ruler – in this case the drawer himself in uniform and decorated with many medals – stands gigantically tall in the foreground and holds his water flask under an equally large spring, while in the background armies march up in seven rows, one above the other, and cities and fortifications are piled up. It is most improbable that the drawer, a simple artisan, found these concepts in museums.

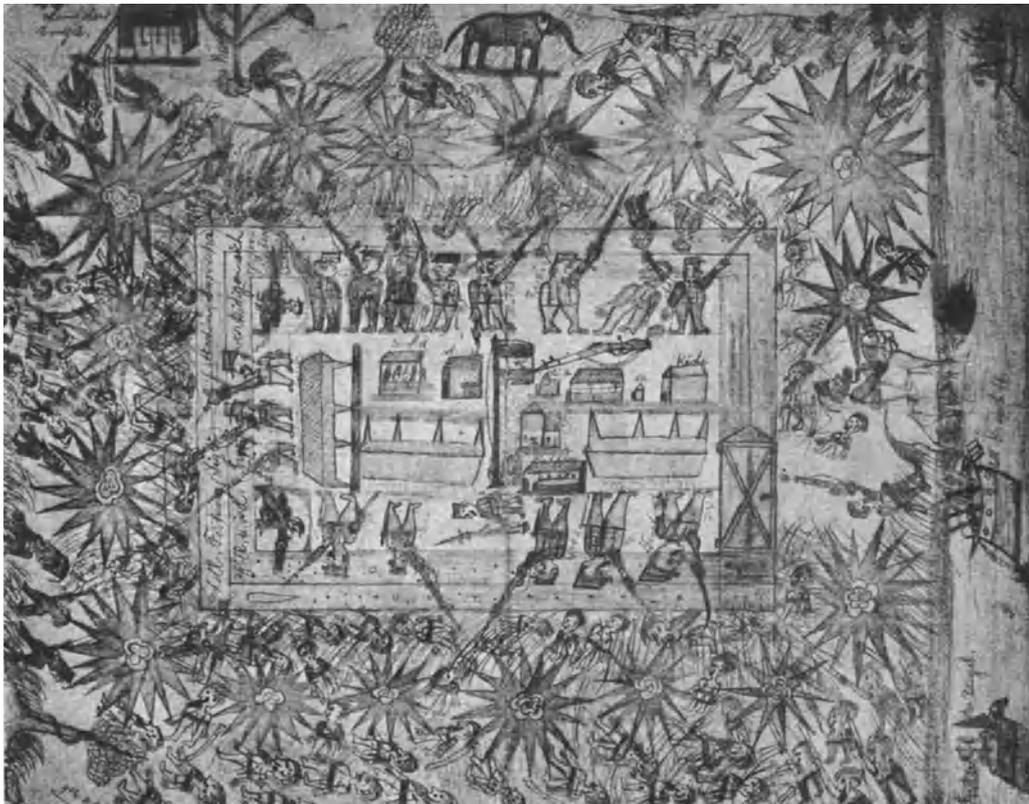


Case 326 **Fig. 26.** Figures at Table (Pencil). 20 × 16 cm.

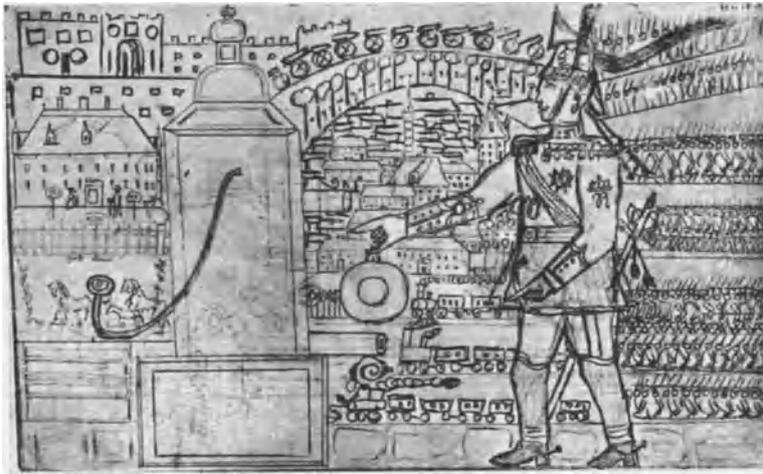


Case 309 **Fig. 27.** Interior of a Hall (Pencil). 32 × 21 cm.

Many experts regard an arrangement in which one motif appears above the next, while perspective overlaps are avoided as much as possible, as a typical developmental step of childish drawing. Figure 30 shows this form of spatial representation. Tulip heads and children's heads are spread out like apples on a shelf. The heads in the rear are, if anything, larger than those in front. The fact that the ground is cut off horizontally



Case 109 **Fig. 28.** Siege of the Fortress Atschin (Pencil). 45 × 36 cm.



Case 2 **Fig. 29.** Soldier and Army (Pencil). 32 × 20 cm.



Case 258 **Fig. 30.** Children in a Landscape (Oil). 76 × 63 cm.



Case 111

**Fig. 31.** Landscape (Pencil).

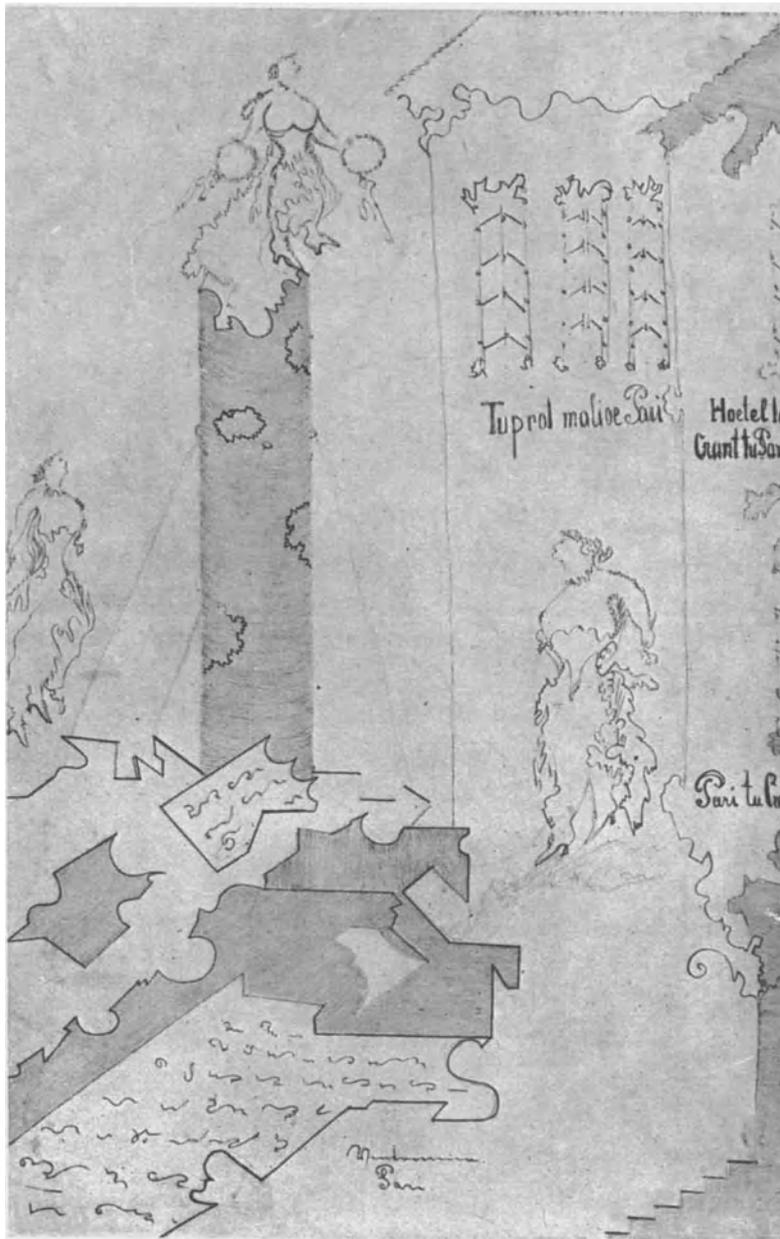
20 × 14 cm.

at the top is noticeable only because the row of firs which stretch into the sky from this horizontal induces us slightly into thinking of perspective. In the stiff lines of heads we can feel sympathetically and immediately the compulsion to stereotypical repetition as we progress slowly from one head to another during a close scrutiny. A touching childish objectivity speaks out of this mass representation which tries to communicate the concept of abundance by means of a naive multiplication. It surely is a sign of a childish mentality which due to illness alone expresses itself so ingenuously. We think of folk painting and of Henri Rousseau, *le Douanier*, who suddenly became a painter and fascinated connoisseurs by the completely straightforward eidetic images which emerged from his charmingly childish being. His pictures and life story make it most probable that we shall have to count him one of the quiet schizophrenics. His winning tenderness and estrangement from the world in combination with his visionary traits all point to schizophrenia. That all the confusion of a final schizophrenic condition does not exclude a spatially clear and pedantically calculated representation is shown by Figure 31, a picture by a Swiss farmer who, according to credible sources, did not draw while healthy but now tirelessly commits landscapes of his home countryside to paper. People from the area are said to have recognized the intended locales easily. While the pedantic objectivity and stylized treatment, especially of trees, remind us of folk art, the extremely clear development of the rolling terrain on the sheet by purely linear and perspective means must be credited to the man's individual talent. We can find a closely related point of view in several landscapes by Karl Haider.

We shall forego reproducing ordinary or good representations of conventional motifs, although we must emphasize that they are by no means completely lacking. Floral arrangements, animal studies, and landscapes are often drawn quite objectively from nature or memory by patients who, when they follow their inspirations, prefer highly bizarre combinations. That should prove that fantastic pictures do not imply a failure in perception. The relationship between copying and freely inventive methods of drawing depends exclusively, as far as our observations indicate, on whether the person already possesses amateur skills or not. Our discussions about the eidetic image make this point

readily understandable (compare with p. 28 ff.). The observation of real objects necessarily produces the eidetic image, which is at first laboriously formed, tested by objective artistic configuration, and then given its final stamp. In contrast, in impulsive, freely inventive drawings non-objective components, either conceptual (especially symbolic) or affective ones, which the perceptual elements are made to serve, apparently predominate. More about this elsewhere.

Similarly, most patients who drew scenes from their surroundings had also drawn earlier, but when an untrained person tries his hand at them he mixes into them a good deal of nonobjective material, and they come to represent more his own mental state than



Case 194 **Fig. 32.** "Vendôme-Column" (Pencil). 21 × 33 cm.

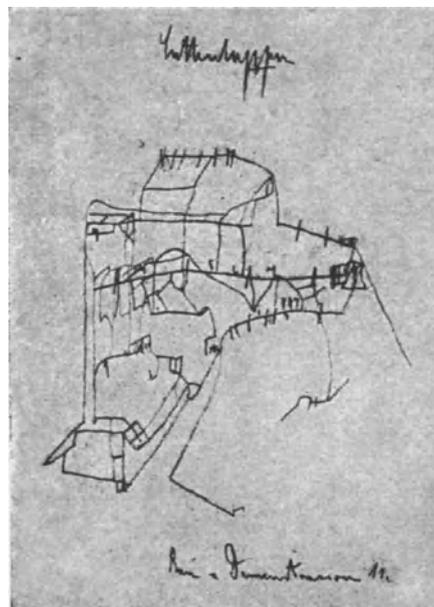
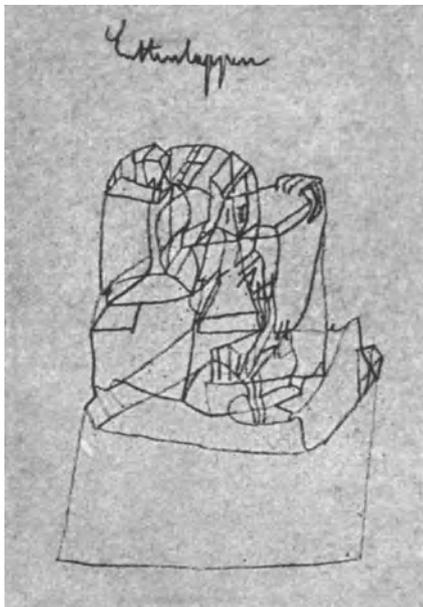


Case 194

**Fig. 33.** Decorative Scribble (Half, pencil).

36 × 23 cm.

a part of his world. The descriptions of personal experiences must be considered from the same point of view; they are particularly favored by epileptics and imbeciles and among these especially by hoboes and criminals, in songs and pictures. The amateur, unless he is a highly trained drawer, will feel himself handicapped in the realistic depiction of inner experiences by his imperfect eidetic images, while the totally untrained person,



Case 27

**Fig. 34 a and b.** Abstract Drawings (Pencil).

11 × 17 cm.



Case 159

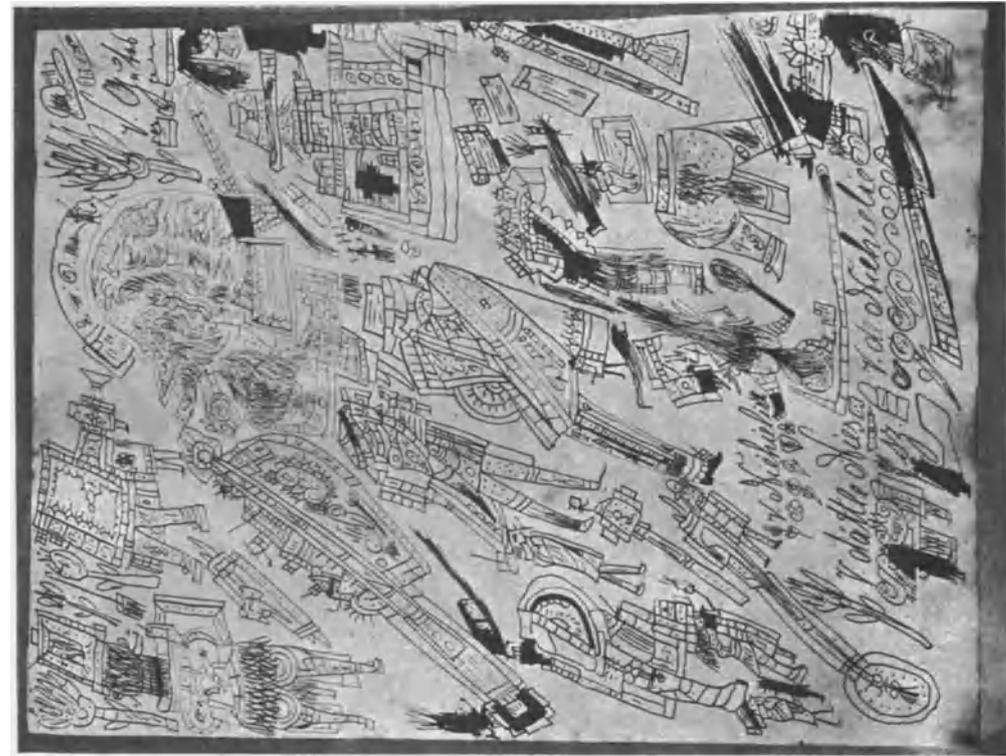
**Fig. 35.**  
Fantastic Figures (Crayon).

33 × 42 cm.

filled with emotionally laden memories, “manifests” himself uncritically when faced with paper and pencil; the results are powerful.

Figure 32 illustrates how drastically different formal tendencies can be combined in one work. According to the caption, this drawing represents the Vendome column in Paris. Perhaps a magazine illustration served as a model. The result in fact is a bizarre scribble which consists of quite a few typical curves used repeatedly by the drawer. Aside from the shaft of the column and the corner of the building next to it hardly a realistic form can be found. The human figures are outlined by the forceful and complicated looped strokes the same schizophrenic also used in Figure 33, a drawing ordered around the central decoration. What we call mannerism in many ranking painters – a quality going beyond their personal characteristics – may be due to the compulsive subordination of representational elements to their customary ornamental habits in the course of the work. The “Vendome Column” is such a mixture carried to absurdity. A similar tendency to abstraction dominates Figure 34, two sheets of toilet paper from a large series of “building demonstrations.” If we try, we can barely imagine a structured architectural mass, especially in the drawing on the left, but the charm of the senseless drawings when they are viewed rationally lies more in the uniform rhythmic movement with which the scribbles are joined into seemingly structured masses. We find similar tendencies in the Welz case (p. 28ff.).

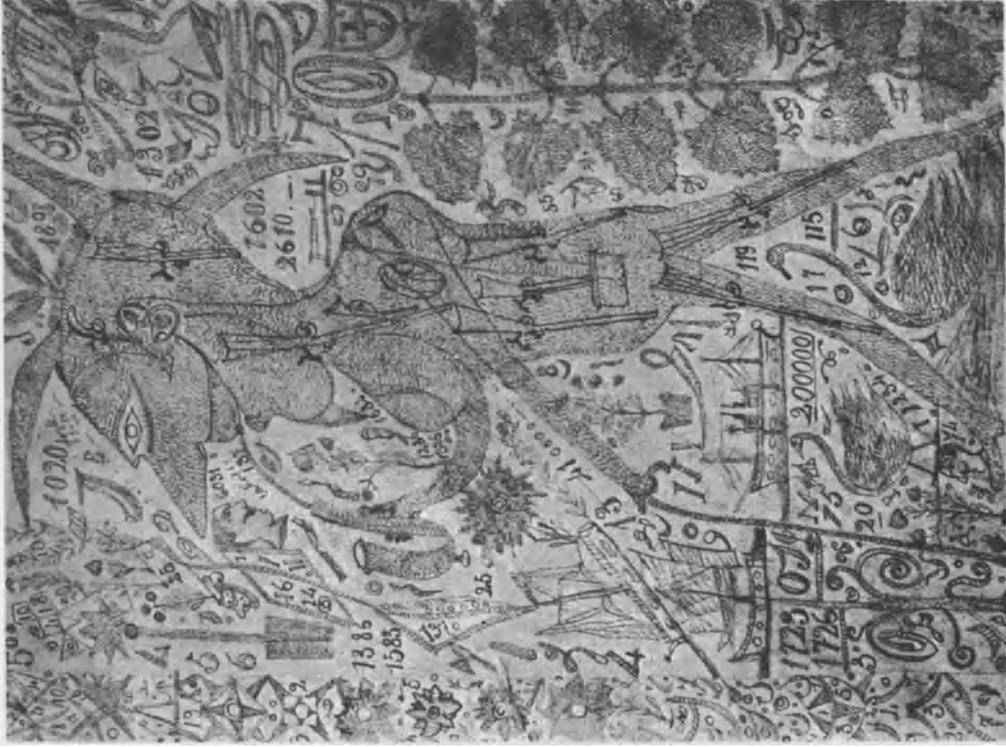
Figure 35 must also be understood as a combination of representation with ornamental decorative play involving the detail forms; indeed, such a blunt mixture is characteristic of the greater part of our material – and of most drawings by untrained persons. The



Case 5

**Fig. 36.** Figure Scribbles (Ink).

20 × 33 cm.



Case 119

**Fig. 37.** Figure Scribble (Ink).

25 × 32 cm.



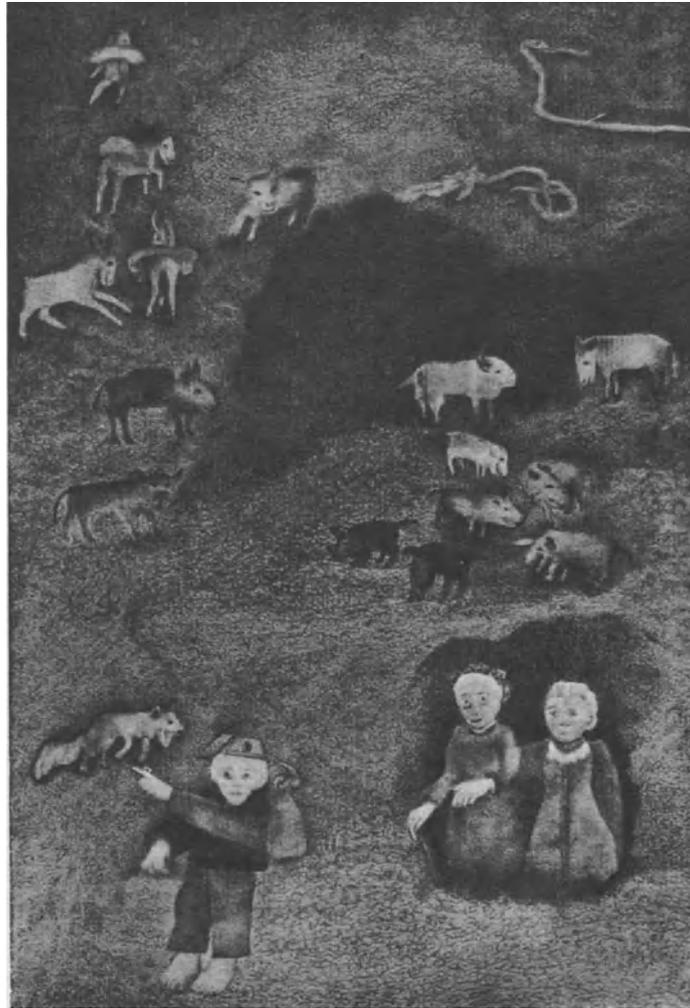
Case 123      **Fig. 38.**      12 × 17 cm.  
 “The Prophet Isaiah in a Countryside”  
 (Pencil).

two figures in Figure 35 have gotten stuck on some interim step between jumping jacks, kings of playing cards, and paper dragons. On first glance we would almost assign Figure 36 to the group of senseless scribbles until closer observation discloses that a multitude of human figures is incorporated in its almost geometric pattern of strokes. These geometric form elements seem almost to have grown luxuriantly, and throttle the little men who become visible among the shifting forms in all sizes – some complete, some fragmented. One is reminded of the sober grotesqueness of sculptured Mexican deities.

Figure 37 is similar to Figure 36 in the way it fills the sheet, but it is much richer in motifs. In it definite objects are intended which, without regard to size or perspective, simply cover the sheet like hieroglyphics. Furthermore, the objects probably contain a secret significance which is not directly obvious. Figure 38, by the same patient who drew Figures 12 and 13, may also be mentioned here because the blending of ornamental–decorative and imitative tendencies is once again immediately noticeable. It must be added, of course, that the title “The Prophet Isaiah in a Countryside” gives the picture a certain nonobjective significance. Furthermore, the psychopathologic symptom of contamination familiar from speech is particularly noticeable in the figure, which consists of two bodies, one on top of the other, the lower one of which is equipped with legs and the upper one, with a head.

## V. Visual Fantasy

Now that we have shown how variously the two formal creative tendencies (the ornamental–decorative and the imitative) are incorporated into a small selection of drawings, we shall take a look at several groups of more complicated works. Earlier we proceeded



*Steiler Pfad.*

Case 121      **Fig. 39.** "Steep Path" (Pencil).      11 × 18 cm.

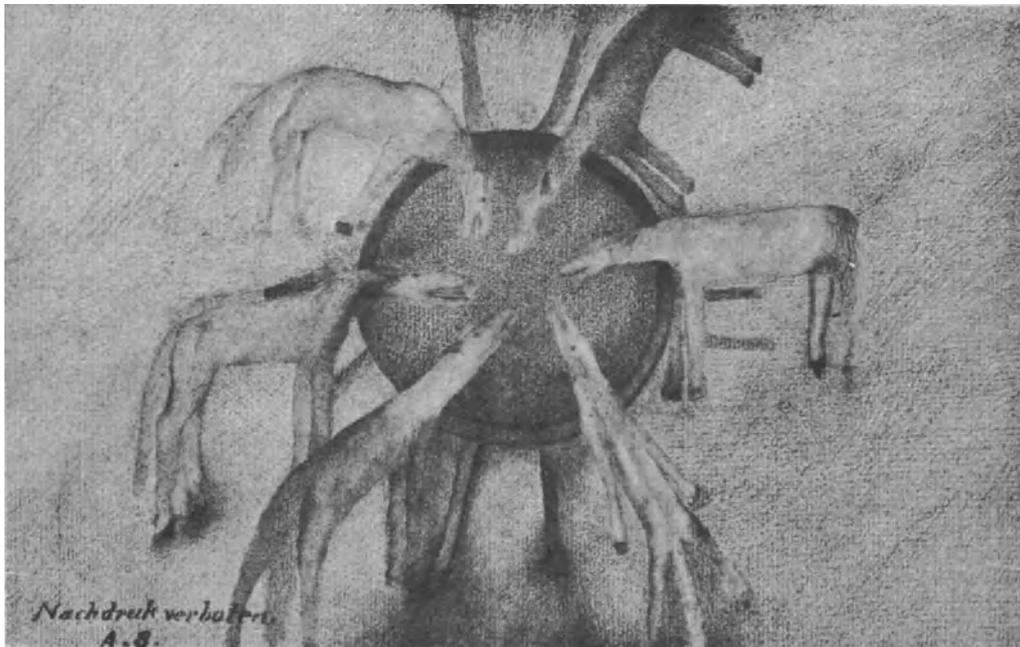
from the principles of configuration and treated single works only as examples, more or less neglecting their individual expressive significance. We wanted to make clear that the anonymous formal tendencies are recognizable in any configurative process, whether at the pinnacles of art or at the level of indifferent scribbles. We expect that our preparation has made a more thorough analysis possible.

If we now try to understand better the psychic atmosphere within the configurator, it is most important that we know how to exclude what is attributable to those anonymous formal tendencies in our pictures so that we can isolate the individual components, *i. e.* the expression of personal experience. The more completely a picture's individual expressive content ripens into commonly understandable and communicative configuration (which it does almost independently of technical skill), the higher will we rank it as a creative achievement. We prefer works whose meaning is apparent in what is represented, without requiring explanations by their authors which point to hidden, deeper relationships, although such relationships are not necessarily excluded as possibilities.



Case 121 **Fig. 40.** "Toad Pond in Moonlight" (Pencil). 16 × 9 cm.

Figures 39 and 41 come from a schizophrenic who in his healthy days was a photographer in a small town. We shall not go far wrong in looking for traces of his retouching technique in the fine, fluffy shading of his pencil drawings. In the one titled "Steep Path" a multitude of small, strange animals can be distinguished from the cloudy background, which may stand for a mountain slope or for infinite space. At the lower right two stylized feminine figures appear arm in arm as if they were leaving a dark cave; they are visible barely to the knees. A third figure, half gnome, half boy, stands in the left foreground no less rigidly and points to a spot above and behind himself where the path, barely recognizable, meanders upward. All three faces stare straight out of the picture, unmoved and pale like masks. The animals, partly recognizable as donkeys, partly peculiar



Case 121 **Fig. 41.** "Feeding Time for the Horses" (Pencil). 19 × 12 cm.

hybrids of pigs, cattle, and guinea pigs, are distributed loosely, with almost no connections between them. Two wrinkled snakes writhe about in the upper right corner. The picture has a strange and eerie quality because of the vagueness of the details and because we find it impossible to attribute any rational meaning to it. It crumbles into numerous single motifs, each of which seems to want to say something original without finding the saving expression. For whom is the pointing gesture of the pale dwarf intended – for the viewer or for the two women emerging from the cave? We gain nothing by posing such questions; the decisive element of this magic world lies precisely in its ambiguous impression, and its relative cohesion can be explained convincingly neither by the composition nor by any rational relationships between the figures. More likely it is the result of the rhythm of a gently shading pencil filling the surface with an even gray on gray.

“The Toad Pond in Moonlight” closely resembles “Steep Path” in appearance, except that it is based on a simple nature motif which nevertheless takes on a mythical element through the close union of its cloudy sky, broken by the moon, with a bubbling pond. A mystical element, raised to monumental proportions, also gives a strangely powerful effect – which was felt especially and consistently by creative artists – to “Feeding Time for the Horses.” It is useless to recognize that at least two irreconcilable images cross one another in the picture, namely the schematic top view of the round feeding trough and the two lower horses as well as the radial arrangement of all the horses, and the profile view of the upper four horses. We must not insist on a uniform realistic perspective but give ourselves over completely to formal, pictorial rules to become totally aware of the grandiose effect of this picture. The unaffected combination of the rationally impossible has in this case especially produced a configuration of which a critical drawer would hardly have been capable. The urge toward a central (decorative) arrangement of the six horses on the sheet has suppressed every tendency toward realistic imagery. Therein lies the key, psychologically speaking, to the formal construction of the group. Whether hallucinatory impulses also contributed to it is unknown, since the drawer died some time ago, but the existence of hallucinations is likely if we compare the drawing with others known to be based on hallucinations (compare p. 77ff.).

The patient of whose work Figure 42 reproduces six pieces has drawn hundreds of quite similarly silhouetted groups of figures, and he has frequently repeated the same scene with minor variations about 20 times. Almost always it shows soldiers, and the scene is always cut off at the top by a dark band in which appears, brightly framed, a small figure. We think of the descriptions by many schizophrenics of how eerily changed their surroundings appear to them and how people move like corpses or machines. Stereotypy on a grand scale, as one might call the repetitions of a single motif, occurs frequently. The patient, for example, who painted the same 10 wagons (Figure 43) in water-colors, clearly drew and colored the view from his window no fewer than 125 times without anyone being able to notice any appreciable difference between the earliest pictures and the last. He always tended to draw series of pictures and completed dozens of cycles of 12 representations with texts, always on legal size sheets. His drawings, as well as the accompanying captions, lead us to the conclusion that he is one of the reasonably orderly paranoiacs, and in fact he is typical of the misunderstood inventors who develop complicated machines and provide them with endless explanations for government offices and princes. At the same time he is a dangerous criminal and a suddenly violent man who must be kept under tight security. Figure 44, “Deeds of Mr. Aff,” shows that he is capable of humor and of an almost genial wit. In Figure 45, which is very recent, he deals in a grotesque way with his favorite theme, the corpulent woman with an immense



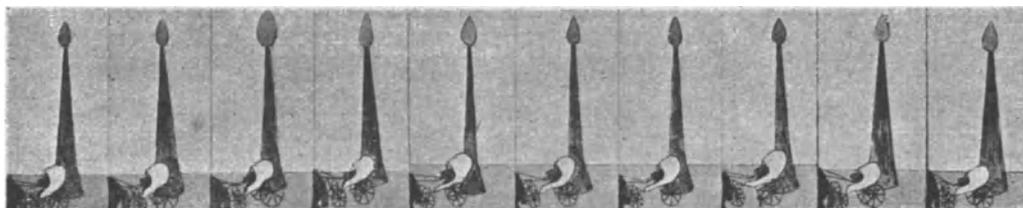
Case 33

**Fig. 42.** Silhouettes (Pencil).

63 × 65 cm.

bust. He states that he has always been fond of drawing but had found no opportunity for it in his occupation as weaver. Numerous scenes of extraordinary charm can be found in his picture cycles which indicate strong talent, especially in the use of perspective which he has mastered well.

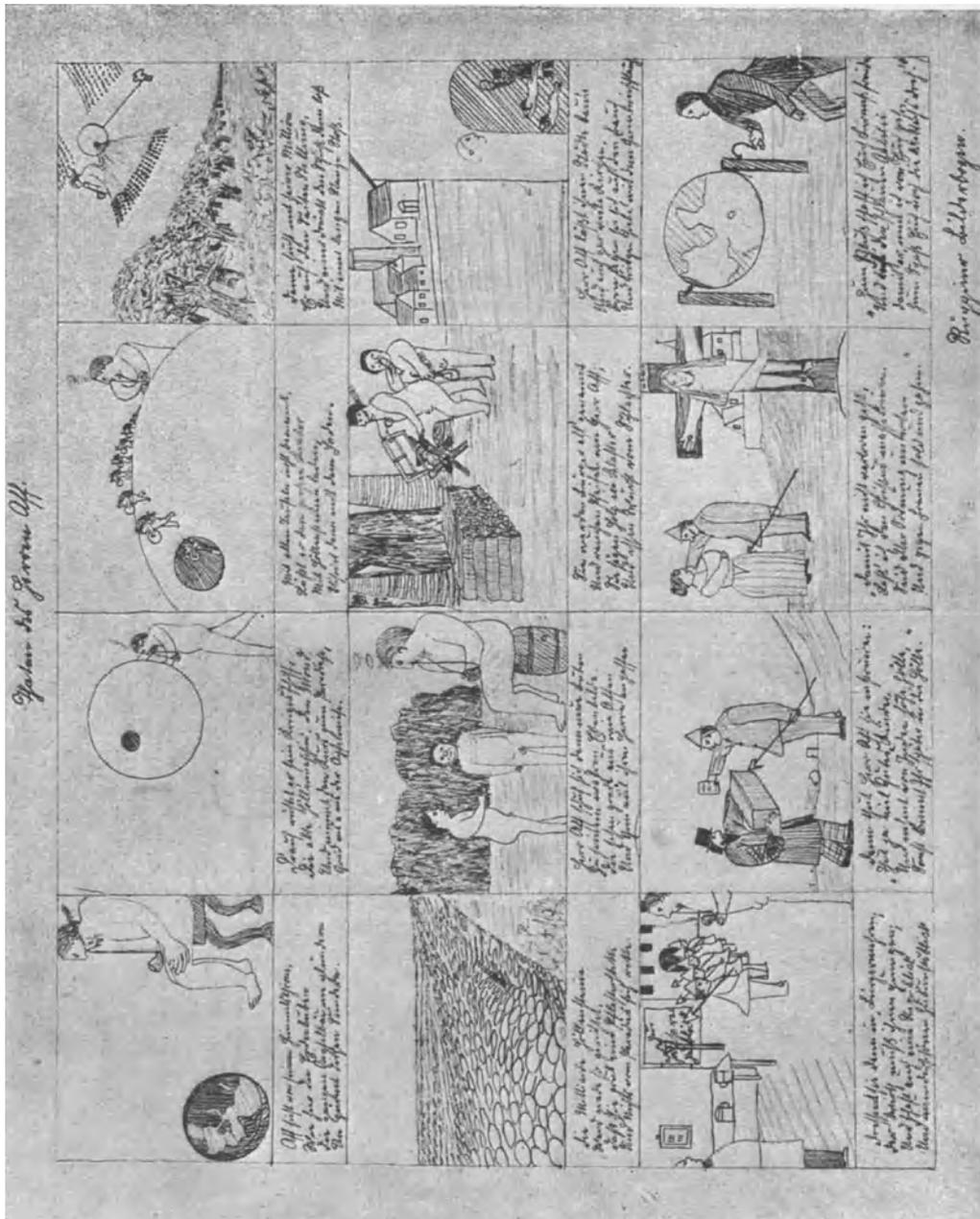
The highly fantastic feminine figure in Figure 46 is by a patient whose medical history suggests no deeper meanings in her drawings. She produced only a few sheets, and only this one is of any value. All the more surprising is the great decisiveness with which this crayon drawing is done and the almost crafty technical adroitness which speaks through the cascading wig. Coming from lower class origins and early independent as a waitress, the patient had hardly any opportunities to gain her skills through practice. In her drawing



Case 1

**Fig. 43.** Carriage and Tree (Water color).

40 × 8 cm.



Case 1

Fig. 44. "Deeds of Mr. Aff" (Pencil).

39 x 29 cm.



Case 1

**Fig. 45.** Dance (Pencil and water color).

26 × 18 cm.

we can easily see how form motifs, at first intended to be representational, begin to luxuriate ornamentally during the course of the work and finally flow unrestrainedly out over the sheet.

“The Pipe Tamper,” Figures 47 (right) and 48 (center), is one of the few carved works in our possession, other than the wood carvings done by Brendel, whose work we discuss below. The man who whittled it, a 70-year-old blacksmith, assured us that he had not done anything of the kind before. He had chosen the piece of wood for a pipe tamper and wanted to make it more presentable by turning it into a human figure. He circled the implement’s base with a tin ring and used it for about six years, during which all its edges were worn away and a beautiful dark brown patina formed, giving the small figurine an antique appearance. The little animal head on its top, called a dog by the patient, serves as a handle for the wire which appears between the legs. It runs right through the torso and is used to clean the pipe. The old man later carved numerous jewelry cases with doors and drawers, which he offered for sale at an inn near the hospital. He often attached human figures to the cases as corner decorations, one atop the next. He made the column reproduced in Figure 47 (left) in imitation of such a spontaneously produced corner molding. One can easily see how much more stylized its three figures are in comparison with the pipe tamper; the grip of the letter opener shown in the illustration, of which he also made many copies, seems even more vacuous. The pipe tamper remains his only really remarkable piece. Many of its features are so reminiscent of primitive art that it could deceive many viewers. These features include thoroughness of execution, in which the proportions of the body (the head constituting more than a quarter of its total length) and the long, closely held arms play a major role; its liveliness in spite of all stylization; the effectively schematized jaw; and the eyes. We shall return later to their relationships and especially to the two flanking figures in Figure 48.

One particular group of pictures conveys an impression which recurs often when we deal with schizophrenics, namely a certain enjoyment in grotesque distortions of the



Case 122      **Fig. 46.** Woman with Wig (Crayon).      21 × 33 cm.

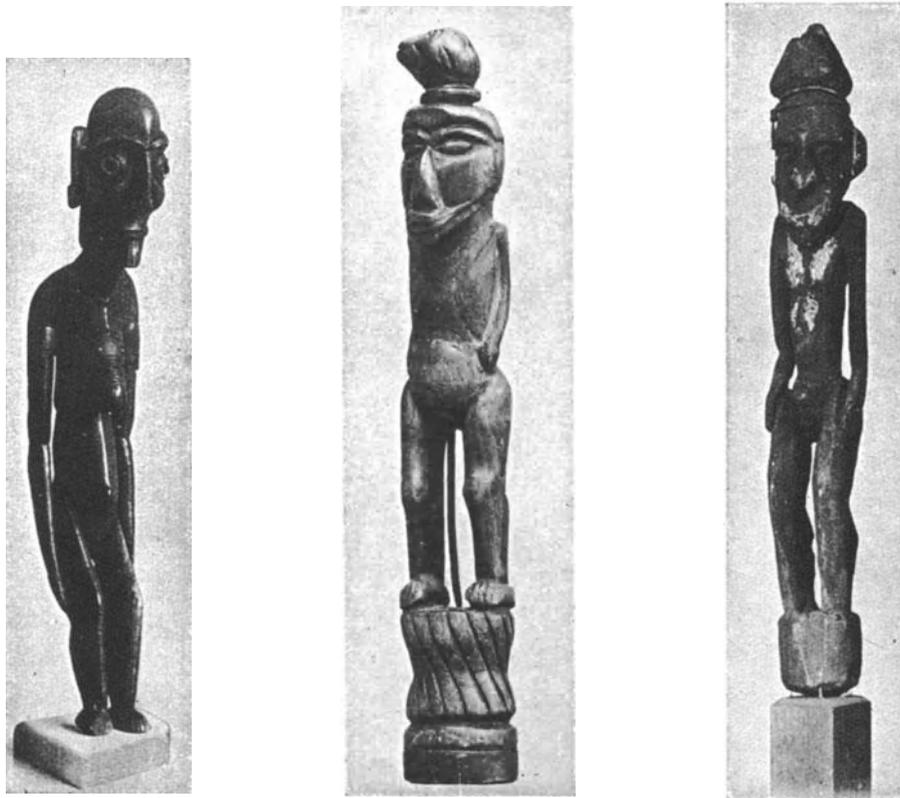
environment. It is not as though schizophrenics cultivate realistic eidetic images and deliberately disfigure them, as intellectuals like to imagine; the distortions instead result from the renunciation of the simply conceived world as well as from a predominance of grotesque, eidetic images which so dominate conceptual life that normality seems rather pale. We would relate this uninhibited dealing with an autonomous world of forms to the play urge in which we already saw a basic cause of all configuration. Of course we have now defined only the psychical attitude and have only just prepared the ground for a more profound question: what and how much of the psyche expresses itself in such an autocratic world of form? We, today, are hindered in freely understanding perception and expression most of all by our ties to a one-sided realistic conception of the



Case 175                      **Fig. 47.**                      25, 25, 14 cm.  
 Human Column, Letter Opener, and Pipe Tamper  
 (Wood).

world. The bizarrely distorted portrait of a lady (Figure 49), whose arms are like a doll's, still seems quite conventional. The drawer has made many similar pictures, copied partly from periodicals and partly modeled on persons from his surroundings, with crayons. His pictures are always dominated by a certain curving line which surrounds faces and bodies equally – the mark of his personal style, if you will.

The most forceful effects of free, grotesque play besides those produced by the wood carver Brendel (p. 96ff.) were achieved by the laborer M. from western Switzerland, from whom we have Figures 50 through 54. He calls Figure 50 "Cannon." It represents a cow in whose innards we see the stomach and intestines in the shape of a stalwart musket just letting off a shot to the rear. The ball, which we see in flight, seems to achieve a considerable synchronous success outside. But the main point is that a thread runs from the musket's trigger to the cow's forefoot, which therefore presumably brings about the discharge. (Bear trainers, who play four or five instruments simultaneously, strike the percussion instrument on their backs by the same method.) Shapes characteristic of cows are mixed in the picture most peculiarly with a hog's head, and the feet even blend into arabesque leaf shapes like those depicting the ground. Even more scurrilous is "The Goatherd Who Bows before His Goat" Figure 51, because in it a man bows by bending his legs which in length resemble those of a stork more than a man's. What is most peculiar, however, is the free use of the goat's foot motif across the whole drawing.



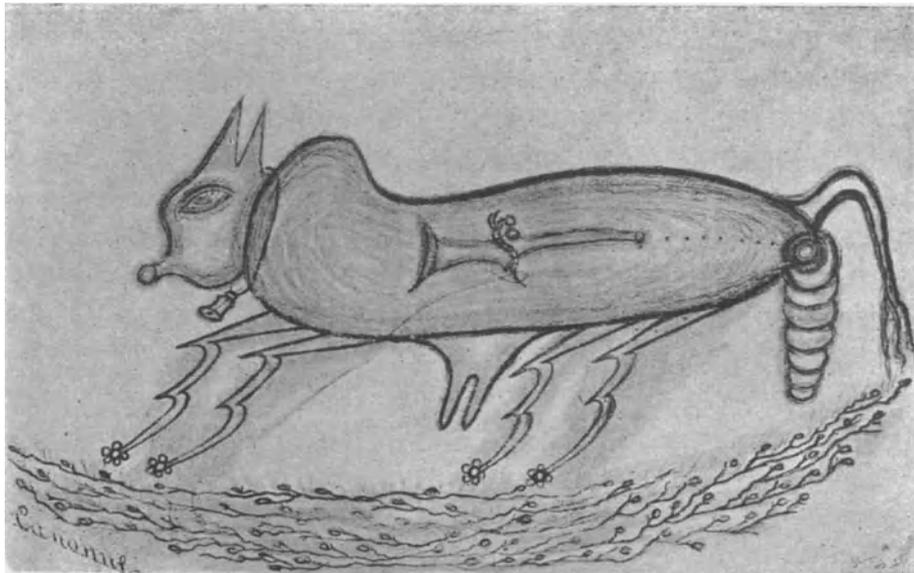
Case 175 **Fig. 48.** "Pipe Tamper" (Wood) 14 cm.  
and two Ancestor Figurines from the Easter Islands (left) and New Guinea.

It reappears not just on the feet of the goatherd and as a tree and a shrub root, but it even replaces the arms of the man and decorates his knees. We see here in an unsurpassed way the application of a form motif without regard to natural relationships, like a musical *leitmotif* which has not completely jettisoned the tie to reality nor yet turned into ornamentation or decoration, in which such a musical composing principle could very easily lead to very impressive results. In "The Dead Small Girl" the man succeeded in creating with his plump, primitive drawing method a work of the most touching psychic expressiveness. The scrawny little body which almost appears to be evaporating, the large head with the crumbling outlines and the diagonally parallel, large, almond-shaped eyes, the fertile vine on the left, and Cinderella's slipper tree on the right with its fantastic fruit — the whole strange mixture somehow is very moving even though there is no pictorial cohesion in the usual sense among the three motifs.

M. has given in completely to his tendencies toward the grotesque in Figures 53 and 54. In a sense the first head has become a variation on a snout motif; in the second the contrast of black and white is carried to extremes, the skin alone being drawn black in contrast to the white of the mucous membranes and hair. In the remaining three heads, however, M. loses himself in wild speculations about the independent vivification of both halves of the faces. The third head can still suggest a lighting effect which makes one-half of it bright and the other dark, but in Figure 54 a new living form does in fact emerge from the dark half of the face. The facial quality of the head on the left still dominates the dark part as well, which projects a peculiar bodily extension rearward,



Case 45 **Fig. 49.** Portrait of a Lady (Crayon). 27 × 29 cm.



Case 116 **Fig. 50.** "Cannon" (Crayon). 49 × 30 cm.



Case 116 **Fig. 51.** 44 × 30 cm.  
 “Le berger faisant la révérence à sa chèvre” (Crayon).

corresponding to the sharply extended white chin. The facial quality of the head on the right, both of the whole as well as of both halves, dwindles in contrast as these halves at the bottom become intertwining legs. The artist himself emphasizes the symbolism of copulation in this form exercise.

M.'s pictures bear a resemblance to the two heads of Figure 55, although these are technically on a far higher plane and are intended primarily to be representational. The drawer was a highly cultivated scholar who as an amateur mainly copied heads from periodicals most pedantically, until finally shortly before his death he succeeded with this drawing and the one following, Figure 56. Unfortunately he left no clue what he intended to express in these powerful configurations. The odd triangle on the forehead



Case 116 **Fig. 52.** “Une petite fille morte” (Crayon). 49 × 30 cm.



Case 112



**Fig. 53.** Three Heads (Chalk).



Each ca. 50 × 80 cm.

of the woman and the withered and corroded face of the man indicate that the picture is based on deeply felt experience, whether a somewhat intellectualized feeling of dread, an actual facial expression conveying dread, or a genuine hallucination. In any event the emotional impact approaches that of great art. The head on the left reminds us of Goya, the one on the right perhaps of Barlach. The caption for Figure 56 describes the experience on which it is based: "Have seen original head often in E., the character however is a mixture," and "December joy: I am your death. Child from E. says to me on that occasion, shaking its head." The stimulus therefore was, in psychiatric terms, the illusionistic interpretation of a real facial expression. The sinister effect of the head likely results from the blending of the lines of a childish face with those of an aged man.

Representations of real hallucinations are extraordinarily scarce. Many pictures of course suggest hallucinations as parts of their origins, particularly to one who is inclined to look for exceptional experiences in every intense and strange pictorial effect and does not realize the creative possibilities of free play. Figures 119 through 123 and Figure



Case 116

**Fig. 54.** ca. 80 × 80 cm.  
Two Heads.



Case 13

**Fig. 55.** Two Heads (Chalk).

70 × 83 cm.

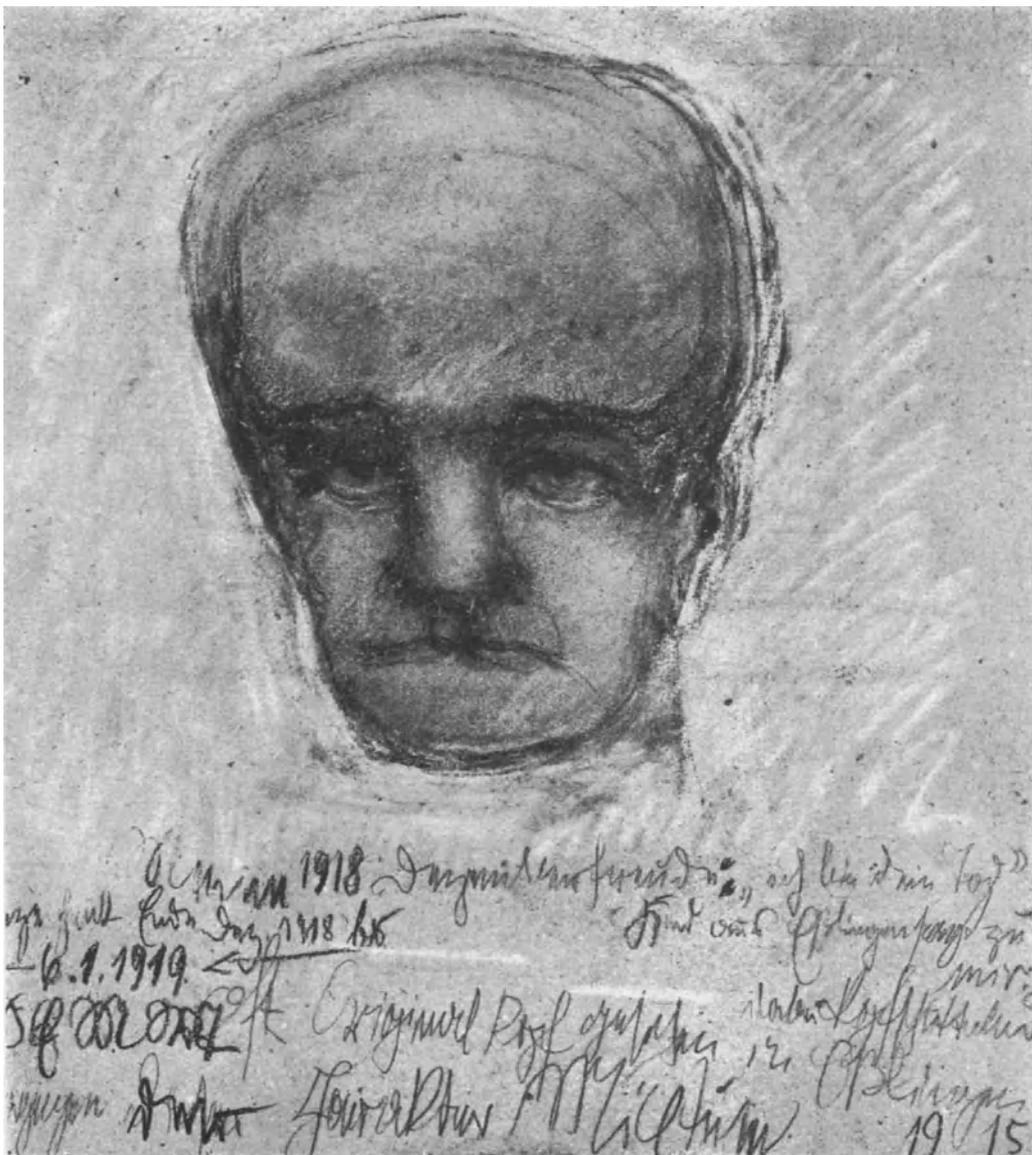
57, by the patient Neter, are quite definitely verified by the patient's own verbal descriptions. The patient's medical history reports about Figure 57:

The attached 'fantasy sketches' which he also calls 'air drawings' are actually no fantasies, according to him; they had been drawn by people centuries ago and transmitted to him by 'air draft'; sometimes he would see them in the air, then, when he had drawn them, he would not see them any more, then another air transmission would occur; they consisted of air masses which no longer existed; when successful the air drawings resembled air, would be blown away by drafts and transferred to others who would draw them in turn; he would not rack his brain about them but draw whatever the air produced in him; the picture produced the air; similarly the swamp would also produce such pictures; sometimes he could recognize his ancestors in the 'air pictures.'

This description of the apparitions explains some of the striking features of the large head quite vividly. A kind of glassy transparency is peculiar to it, but the picture is remarkable in its details as well. As soon as we recognize it as a head we are pulled into

the textural rhythm of the strokes, which cover the whole sheet like an independent growth. The vitality of the strokes almost outweighs their representational meaning. The texture, which cannot quite be captured by the concept of the ornamental, is essentially similar to that used by old German masters, but our drawer finds his particular pleasure in emphasizing the projecting parts of the face as if they were formed from another material. One is reminded of the shapes assumed by baked goods in boiling fat, and of intestines or abscesses. It is precisely this variety of forms suggested in a human face which accounts for the horror of the total impression.

The drawer of Figure 58, an uneducated day laborer and tramp, describes his hallucinations very similarly. He does not know whether apparitions first appeared to him in a dream or while he was awake:



Case 13

**Fig. 56.** Child's Head (Chalk).

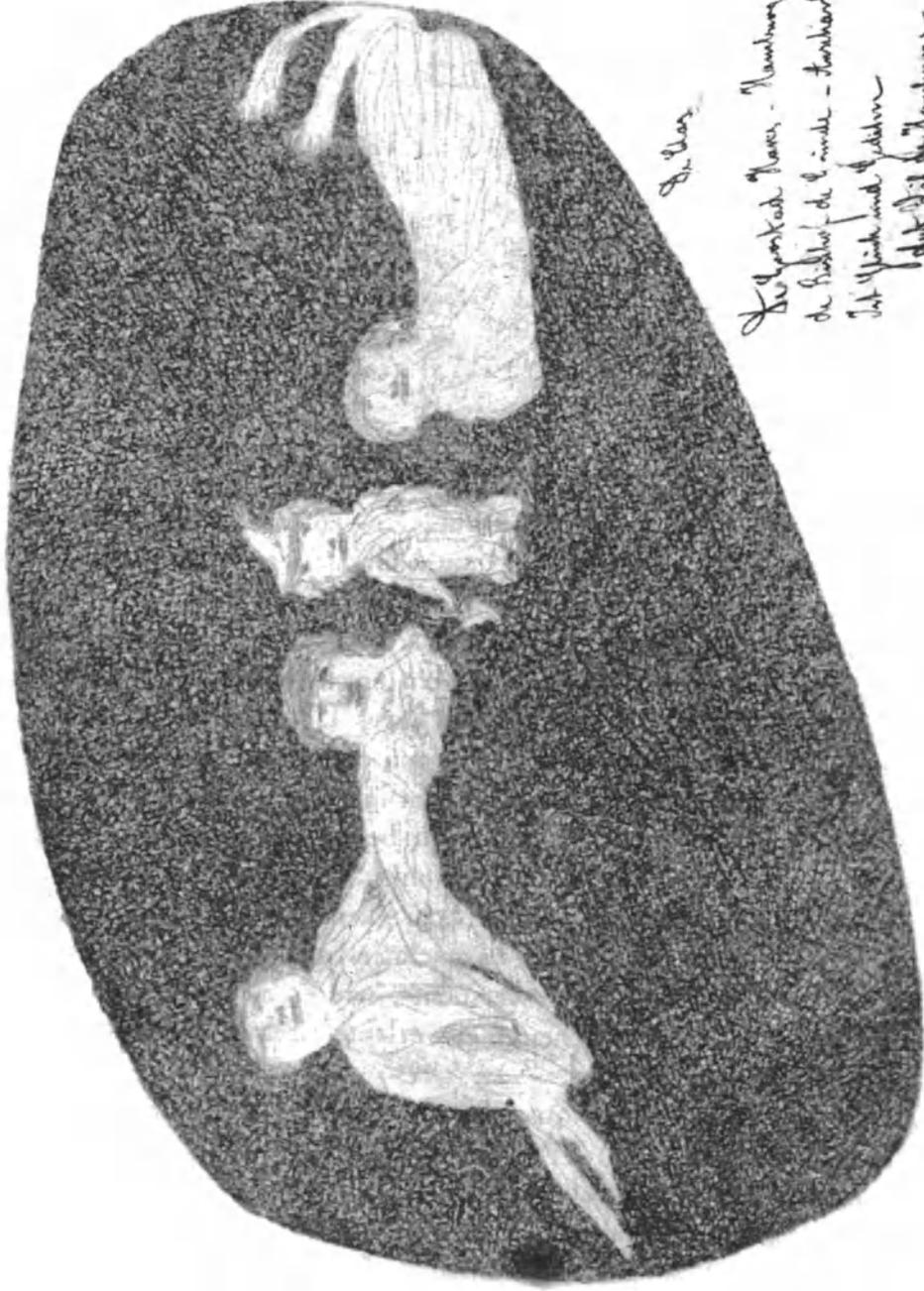
33 × 36 cm.



Case 26

**Fig. 57.** "Air Apparition;" Hallucination (Pencil).

19 × 33 cm.



*Dr. Blas.*

*Die gezeichnete Szene - Hamburg  
 die Fischer der L. in der - der Hand  
 mit Fische und Fische  
 steht still die Hamburg  
 die Hamburg L. und Fische  
 in Wasser nicht fern*

*aus G. H. S. Bucher*

**Fig. 58.** "Water Spirits"; Hallucination (Pencil).

33 x 25 cm.

I sat up in bed when these – how shall I put it? – these beasts appeared out of the water and my mother was among them. They were sort of half men, half animals; that I saw very clearly. It probably involved witchcraft. I think that my mother wanted to pull me into the water, that I might have left the world this way – when I lie down this reappears now and then – I see it in the air and best in the half dark.

The patient has finished quite a number of drawings similar to Figure 58, in each of which an area which appears to be granulated is created within the irregular outline of a large rock by an even hatching; according to the explanation it probably represents the water. The blank figures stand out brightly against the dark background. They are indicated by highly tenuous, thin lines without any clear delineation of the parts of the body. Smaller dwarflike bodies with large heads which often have a rather animalistic appearance stand regularly between the resting and the suspended bodies. A lascivious charm which is hard to define issues from these figures. The poems attached by the drawer usually defy any attempt to relate them to the drawings. The hallucinatory origin of Figure 160 of the patient Pohl cannot be doubted, but in other cases we are reduced to assumptions. Figure 59, “The Horror Ambush,” comes from a young hebephrenic



Case 100      **Fig. 59.** “Horror Ambush” (Chalk).      23 × 16 cm.

who began to draw spontaneously and, encouraged by us, tried to depict his first experience of apparitions, which occurred while he sat at a table at home. His descriptions of the scene were very meager.

The following four pictures are watercolors painted in the asylum by an old butler who attached written explanations to them. These explanations, mostly confined to objective descriptions and reminiscent of old chronicles, point by their strange complexity to schizophrenia, whereas the institution assumed that he was afflicted by senile mania. The man was the kind of character often found in university towns. He composed simple verses which he claimed to sell in pamphlet form and “composed” whole notebooks of “music,” *i. e.*, he painted numerous thick notes in many colors on musical staves, without musical meaning, of course. He seems to have hallucinated much in the asylum, primarily acoustically, but we must also consider the probability of hallucinations in his pictures. The patient’s history is complicated by his confirmed alcoholism. Most of his watercolors



Case 355

**Fig. 60.** "The Rocking Boulder" (Water color).

33 x 21 cm.

are remarkable for their technique which resembles that of miniatures; he applied the paint as dryly as possible, preferably in small projecting drops, favored muted tones, and brushed in a way that resembled drawing.

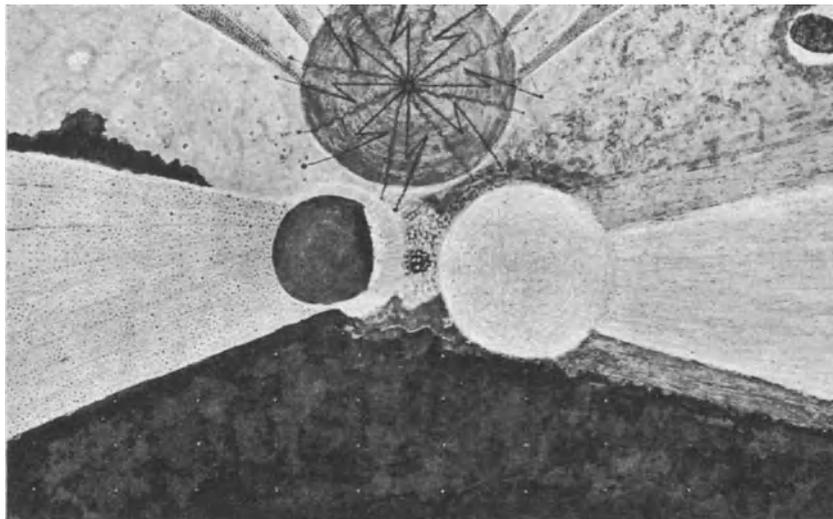
The following explanation belongs to “The Rocking Boulder,” Figure 60.

Explain a rocking boulder (granite) 1868 after Pentecost climb the r. in walk round close to Eichstätter highway; convince r. rocking find place in midst; rocked with feet apart; two towers high; 3 loads of earth trucked up stuff stalks as on island Helgoland; 6 bushes blackthorn planted round as protection; on the slope I am dizzy; squat down; crawl down the same path slowly on all fours; meet 2 customers; 3 to metropolis Vienna; viaticate; because  $1\frac{1}{4}$  finds no condition, received double viaticum 8 florins; night inn golden crown no bed, neither hotel, inn is still private, is full; maid lights lantern, leads me into cow barn, bars door; sleep on straw; unclean; middle night rustling noise wakes me; dark; snorts at me; reach for it; grab a horn; feel edge of straw hat; pull this way that way; bump into chain hanging beam; let go; feed to beast; tuba player; my new straw hat ruined tomorrow Pentecost, no store open; no straw stalk on top; fall asleep angrily depressed and worried; first holiday visit zoolog. garden, spit a lama chews hay with juice without hat face and eyes full. O.H.

According to the foregoing the inspiration for the picture came from an old recollection from the time when the drawer was hiking, a supposition corroborated by other drawings as well. A major part of the charm of Figure 60, aside from the subtle watercolor technique, is due to the construction of the landscape. Rudimentary perspective skills are mixed into a rather childish accumulation of individual motifs arranged on top of one another or sequentially; the spatial effect consequently is strangely suspended between “correctness” and a childishly naive, fabulizing artlessness.

Another group of pictures by the same man is dedicated to cosmic events like comets. The following notation belongs to Figure 61.

Explanation about end of world. On 3d April 2053 in consequence of collision of the ice comet with comet Bila main comet in indescribable distance on western horizon, sun, moon, stars darken; drop vertically into endless night. O.H. General Director of Royal Mental Clinic.



Case 355 **Fig. 61.** “Collision of the Planets” (Water color). 33 × 21 cm.

It is not known what visual hallucinations H. had. Particularly in the two following pictures hallucinatory experiences cannot be discounted. Figure 62 bears the following explanation:

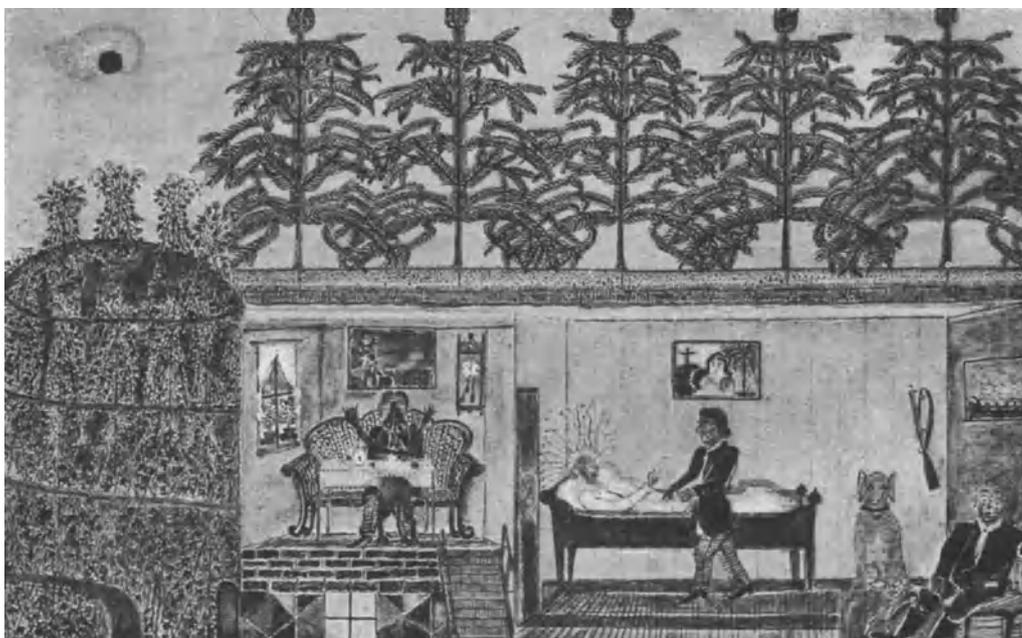
Dissertation about judgment between heaven and earth occurs only in thunderstorm; on All Saints' orders are – holy apostle and missionary kneeling took testimony; shadow prince makes claim for fallen away, which basis accusation belong to him; through prince formula follow guilty in leonid cloud; inside ghost stretches electro to wink, moment through burst earth rind souls in hell to transport; ghost magnet hurries electro step; lady unnamed beneficent; myself I throw her into hell; want to know name? quote in youth medium prince of shadows in his body; speak truly to teach a quarter hour; thank for name; ask about quote in picture; how long punishment? ask about yourself; follow his advice; then there is no share; quiet relaxes your soul; ask about relatives; gray prince likes to converse; appears on order; fear nothing! ask about job; harmless. O. H. Hypno-Electro-Hypnotist.

Figure 63 seems to hark back to H.'s activity as a hypnotist. The house in it is constructed like a doll house, the decorative arrangement of the fir trees above it and the paint drop technique once again exhibiting considerable charm. It should be especially emphasized that the sparks, which are expressly described as violet (see below), are not violet at all but green, red, and white. Even when a quite specific scene is portrayed knowledge about details does not prevail; instead, they are somehow displaced or replaced by formal components during the process of configuration. The scene in which the animal threatens or embraces the man is not explained by the attached note:

Dissertation about Mrs. Gern. Stand 1886 at bed Mrs. Gern on recommendation Dr. U. treats G; give transparent glass; looks at it 1 minute; speaks on command: 'I am tired and want to sleep' 'you are tired and want to sleep' – slumbers – 'your body circulation healing electromagnetic current'; moment wave hair violet sparks; swell arteries, cheek red – 'awake completely healthy to new life'. – O. H. General Manager.



Case 355 **Fig. 62.** "Judgment between Heaven and Earth" (Water color). 33 × 21 cm.



Case 355

**Fig. 63.** “Mrs. Gern” (Water color).

33 × 21 cm.

## *VI. Increased Significance – Symbolism*

When we explain puzzling drawings with the help of the patients’ own statements we must never forget how many secretive things they like to read into playfully created drawings. The best example is Figure 64, a large picture in dull watercolors, gray-green and brown, and broadly brushed. The man whose work it is, a rough workman who showed no trace of artistic talent, declared firmly that the picture represented a forest with many trees, a dragon, blood, and a small bird. With some willingness on our part we can finally recognize trees in the mostly vertical brush strokes and the colors; nothing at all can be found to represent the rest of the objects the man claimed to have realized. In other words an insignificant degree of configuration corresponds with a pretentious description of the content. What we do see is, so to speak, only the gesture of the painter, a delusory trait often shown by patients in other activities. Gestures of musical composition especially are not rare. Devices resembling notes, bars, and especially comprehensive directions for performances are inscribed on parallel lines whose numbers vary between three and 10. When such “compositions” are then ceremoniously sung by their authors the relationship between achievement and gesture is like that between our artist’s gesture and the dragon forest. Other patients proceed more thoroughly and try to establish their own form language in which simple curves are given a certain significance and then used stereotypically, or they attempt intuitively to discover an expressive curve with a specific inherent significance by immersing themselves in some idea or other, like the patient Welz (p. 199).



Case 82

**Fig. 64.** "Forest with Birds, Dragon and Blood" (Water color).

56 × 37 cm.

In some of the pictures we discussed we already had to call attention to the expanded significance beyond the patently obvious offered to the viewer by a mysterious background. Whether the first emotional impact, before it is dissolved by reflection, corresponds to a similar affective condition of the artist, can be determined only in exceptional cases, when verbal or written explanations have been preserved. Our materials can also show that a picture can have an emotional impact on a viewer without a corresponding experience in the originator, a fact difficult to formulate logically but explained quite easily psychologically. One can always find symbolism when an unobjective component is intentionally included in a picture or even suggests itself without the artist's intention: that is purely a matter of terminology. We tend to distinguish the concept of symbolism from its psychological genesis in individual cases (whether someone uses symbols consciously or unconsciously) and shall have something to add later about the theory of the problem. For now it suffices to explain that we always speak of symbolism in the larger sense whenever we find abstract, psychic, or supernatural elements in what is presented objectively, or when a picture becomes a metaphor. Whether we are able to interpret symbols – and allegories not easily distinguishable from symbols – depends primarily on the extent to which an artist uses conventional symbols or, on the other hand, undertakes to coin new ones. We must further distinguish magic, occult meanings when they can hardly be deduced directly from a picture but are supplied only by verbal explanations. The most rewarding pictures based on symbolic conceptualizations belong to our 10 major cases (p. 96 ff.). Here some simple examples will show the many ways in which symbolic leanings can be mingled with other tendencies.

In Figure 65 ecclesiastical symbols are loosely and simply associated side by side. Its author has made numerous similar pictures in strong colors, using gold heavily. Most importantly, however, he has erected fantastic altars in the ward room which also consist of all kinds of symbols and used up vast quantities of splendiferous paper. In front of these altars he has conducted ceremonial prayers. Our picture, overgrown with numerous inscriptions in which "God Omnipotent Holy Master" meets with "Gambrinius" is, we may say, a graphic realization of ecclesiastical implements and symbols, without any attempt at constructive arrangement or even a consistent decorative order. Only the dove, suspended in the center of the circle of rays at the top, in front of the triangle (the eye of God), unifies the loose construction. In Figure 66, however, a complete church scene, childishly outlined and with straightforward details, is intended, and only a few symbols are attached to it: the eye of God in two forms and the rooster. What is especially striking about the cubistic Christ, who is simply hung on a linear cross, is the inscription near the head which describes "sin-people" as "male-female": we shall refer to the same theme again in another connection. Figure 67 rises from the confines of simple scribbles

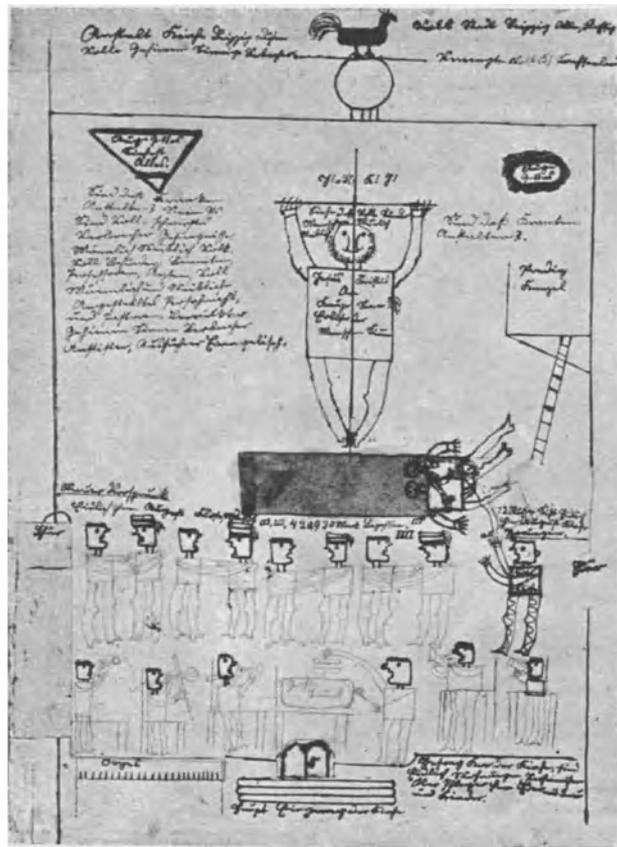


Case 171

**Fig. 65.**

20 × 33 cm.

Symbolic Drawing (Ink and Water color).



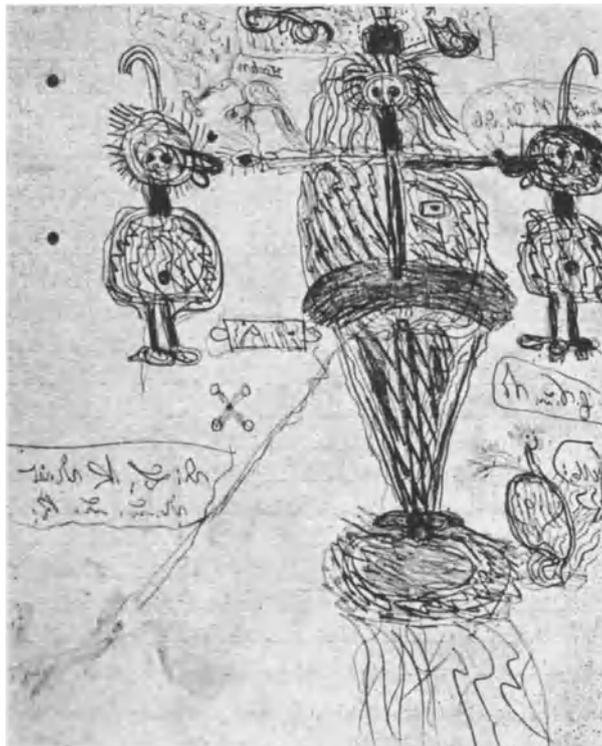
Case 47 **Fig. 66.** 23 x 32 cm.  
Religious-symbolic Drawing (Ink).

into the symbolic sphere. The same manic produced this figure and the heads in Figure 23. This crucifixion scene looks as it was arrived at accidentally. While the two robbers come out childishly grotesque, the Virgin Mary at the lower left is represented only by a fabulous animal. Why the rooster flies from the head of Christ to the robber on the right remains inexplicable. Figure 68 loosely combines in its lower part childish implements and inscriptions similar to Figure 64, but achieves an imposing and strange effect with the two almost equal symmetrically arranged, bearded heads and the caption "Ecce Homo." This effect is due primarily to the dissolution of all detail forms of the heads into almost ornamental curves.

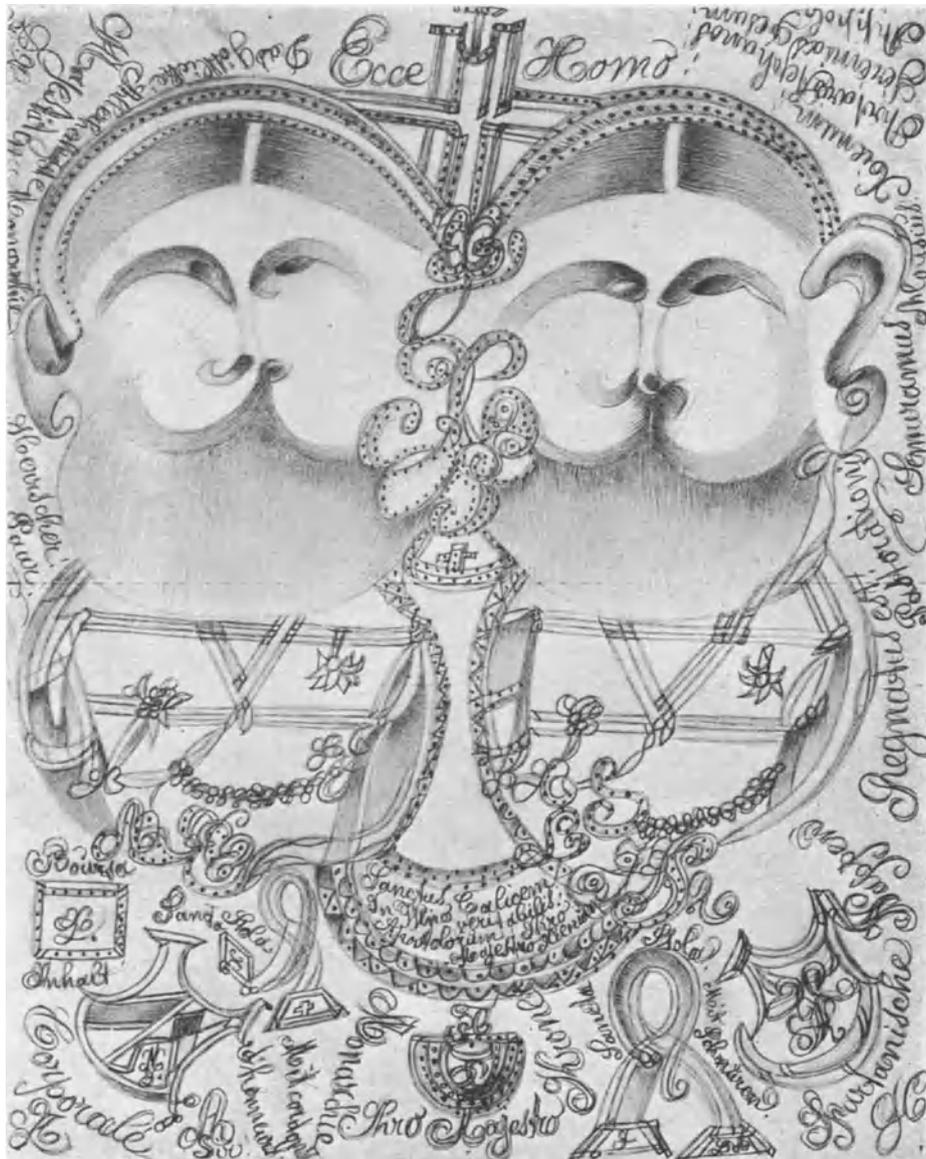
Figures 69 and 70 are reasonably pure examples of two additional picture types. Figure 69 is a primarily allegoric scene: a woman stretches out on a cot erected on the back of a dragon (sin). A stag bellows in the background. The rising sun, the heart, the moon sickle, and the stars in the picture cannot be unambiguously related to this paraphrase of fleshly lust. Figure 70, on the other hand, is constructed almost totally of conventional symbols whose combination nevertheless does not reveal rational meaning but seems to have resulted rather more playfully from decorative conceptions: an owl, a horseshoe, a cross, an anchor, and three circles in front of flames (perhaps designed as a heart and intended in part as the trinity). The same artist in fact made dozens of similar drawings, as well as purely geometric drawings during the interims.

Figures 71 and 72 show how a systematic delusion can determine the whole act of creation. The patient, transferred in the 1890s from America into a German asylum where he died some time ago, perceived images like those shown only on the insoles of shoes, from which he copied them. The following excerpt from the very full accompanying texts he made for some of the drawings may increase our insight into his peculiar conglomerates of heads, birds, deer, numbers, etc.:

‘Cristo viene, los muertos se levantan!’ ‘Christ comes, the dead arise,’ is inscribed at the scene of a crime which begins with a judicial murder marked by a habeas corpus writ, and incited by insane physicians in the service of American railroad subsidy swindlers in Mexico, was hidden for 15 years behind insolent conscious falsification of documents by methodically secret poison murderers and killers in Germany, and ends with a miracle by the Holy Ghost, as represented in the attached drawing, a miracle in the insole of the victim ruthlessly sacrificed, disinherited, declared dead, by the secret violent poisoning and brain crushing of assassins possessed by Satan and mentally disturbed. A four-sided picture in an insole in connection with a new, hidden, double poison murder which can be understood and interpreted only by reference to the photographs of my dead parents Eduard and Mathilde L. née C. and their nine children. The parents, of whom the father, who died in 1893, was unwittingly defrauded in a raw, mean way which exposes the whole German bureaucracy, while my mother, whom death claimed 10 years earlier, in 1883, unmask the damnable murderers of her son in this wonderful picture, which surely appears inexplicable to everyone, including me, under the sign of the Holy Ghost, a white dove and the sign of suffering, a black cross which represents the secret brain and spine crushings, the head crucifixion which has engraved unmistakable marks of the secret crime, the falling out of beard, hair, and eyebrows, the scars and spots, while the mother demands revenge, ‘a hair for a hair,’ by her hair, bound by a ribbon into a caption and stuck up with combs. For details see extra sheet. C.L.



Case 94      **Fig. 67.** Crucifixion (Pencil).      17 × 21 cm.

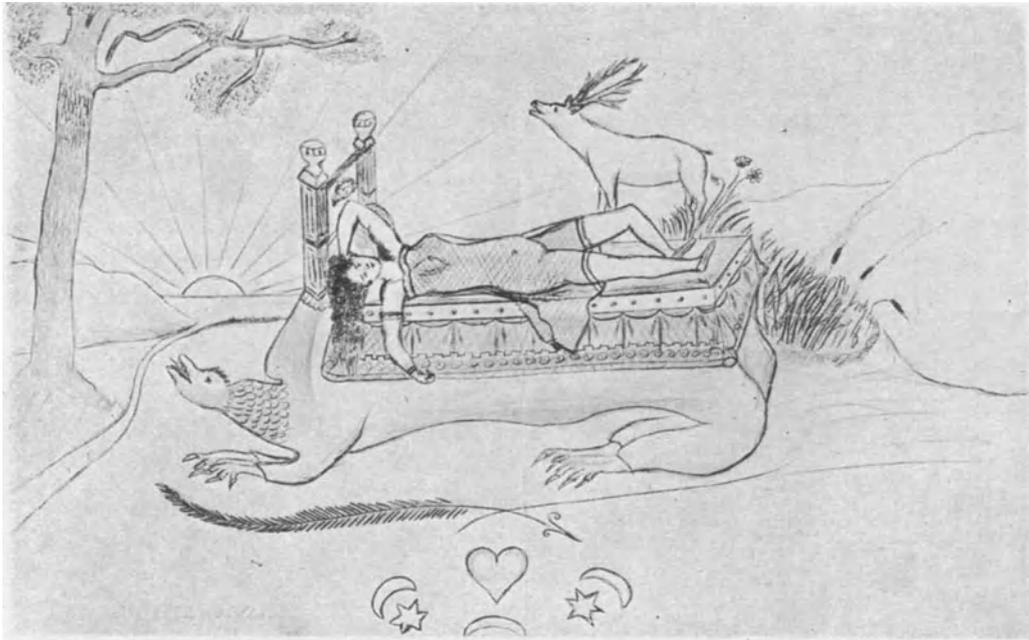


Case 91

**Fig. 68.** "Ecce Homo" (Pencil).

33 × 42 cm.

If some of the groups in Figure 72 appear to be only a puzzling confusion of unrelated parts, as if multiple exposures had been made on a single photographic plate, the relationship between man and deer in others grows into a touching and close union. The humble gesture of the large head, whose hand raises a ring, has about it an especially expressive style. A logical attempt to represent two heads with a single nose, which has recently also occupied many artists and driven them to similar mystical experiments, is particularly noticeable in the group of three heads in the upper left. The dignified group in Figure 71 has about it a quiet monumentality which reminds us of Rethel's veiled head of Charlemagne. We cannot attempt here any more precise analysis of these extraordinarily fascinating drawings and their rich motifs. The biographical facts are too involved. The generous use of Christian symbols, which we already observed in numerous works by other

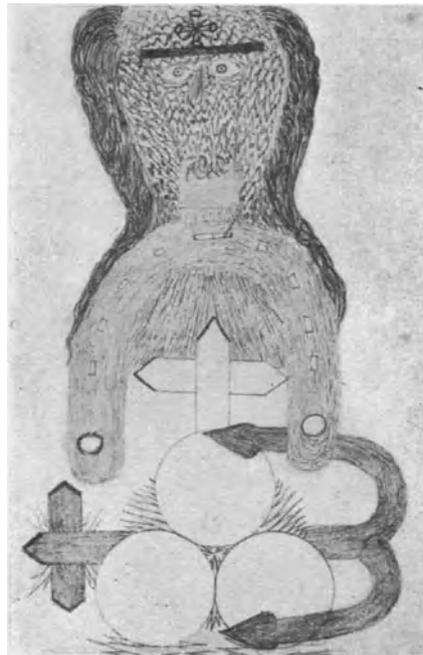


Case 237

**Fig. 69.** Allegorical Drawing (Pencil).

33 × 20 cm.

patients, must still be pointed out, as well as the inscription in the lower left corner of Figure 71. It appears above the figure of Christ, who wears a crown of thorns, has a cross on his forehead, and two sandals in his hands, and is symptomatic of the delusion of the patient: "The gods have made sweat preferable to virtue."



Case 66

**Fig. 70.** 20 × 33 cm.

Symbolic Drawing (Pencil).

Figure 73 shows how a trained drawer designs a fantastically vivid picture filled with secret meanings. Until the beginning of his psychosis the man was a lithographic draftsman in Paris, not especially well educated, by the way, and more artisan than artist. The drawing originated in the 1890s and cannot be explained by the patient's own descriptions, although some individual motifs are quite clear. We recognize his training primarily by his attempt at perspective which, however, was not completely successful, being broken into by the group on the right, which is apparently most important. It is a pair of crucified figures under a crown canopy wound about with string and flanked below by two angels and above by two crows. Clouds bear the group into the room below. An ancient watchman with a towering halberd and a lantern stands in the foreground. The smaller figures resist interpretation and so does the base in the foreground with the weakly modeled lion on it. Once again an inscription adds a special point: "Church light. Painting by Michael Angelo, Papal Executioner."

On the other hand, we recognize in Figure 74 the method by which a completely uneducated person with strong symbolic tendencies creates a form language for himself.<sup>26</sup> For him the sheet is not intended for spatial depiction but for decorative division with flat stereotypical forms, each of which is given a distinct range of meaning by countless repetition. Similar pictures suggest that the large figure is a sort of guardian angel with wings. The drawer means himself by "St. Adolf, Great-God-Father." He repeats the snake and "birdie" motif, which was always very important to him, as often as possible by using the interstices. The "bell" motif on the edge shows that the sheet is also to be read as music, the "bells" indicating the meter. The suggestive effect of arbitrary colorfulness can hardly be shown more impressively than in this picture.

Figures 75 and 76 illustrate the blasphemous distortion of churchly symbols in the service of erotic fantasies. "Russian Woman's Love" which "is legally protected in insane asylums" could have, because of its crown of rays, been inspired directly by the shrines common in many places, while the heart of flame with the cross of suffering on it is a free association, especially in this particular place. The crucifixion of the woman in Figure 76 becomes important especially as an object of comparison with other treatments of the same theme. Figure 77, by a farmer from Appenzell, is especially rich in puzzles. In the middle of a palatial building which is, however, treated merely as a façade, the scene to which the following inscription applies is shown under an arch: "Answer of Jessu III Years Old At the Cleaning of a Fish Bowl What Do You Think? Small Messiah From Fishy Bowl Does it Not Go the Same for Woman." The explanation by the very confused artist was very unrewarding. He made a very sly face and simply pointed to the individual features of the drawing, the stag which also demands fresh water, above the fishbowl scene, the bell in the tower, the dove of the Holy Spirit, the star of Bethlehem, etc., without clearing up their relationships. The same man drew a radish on which Christ appears with chalice and host amidst rich ornamentation. He said he had seen Him on a radish freshly drawn out of the earth. Magic still clearly plays a role for this man because he always carries his creations to the toilet where he sinks them with ceremonial incantations.

A clockmaker from the country who lived in the institution for almost 30 years painted Figure 78, which is rich in forms and colors. He began to draw only in the eleventh year of his stay, the twenty-first year after his schizophrenia was confirmed, and on his

<sup>26</sup> This case has just been discussed in a monograph by Morgenthaler, *Ein Geisteskranker als Künstler*, Bern, 1921. This very fascinating biography of a man, with 24 illustrations, is carefully psychoanalyzed. We believe we have found here points of view useful for problems of configuration.

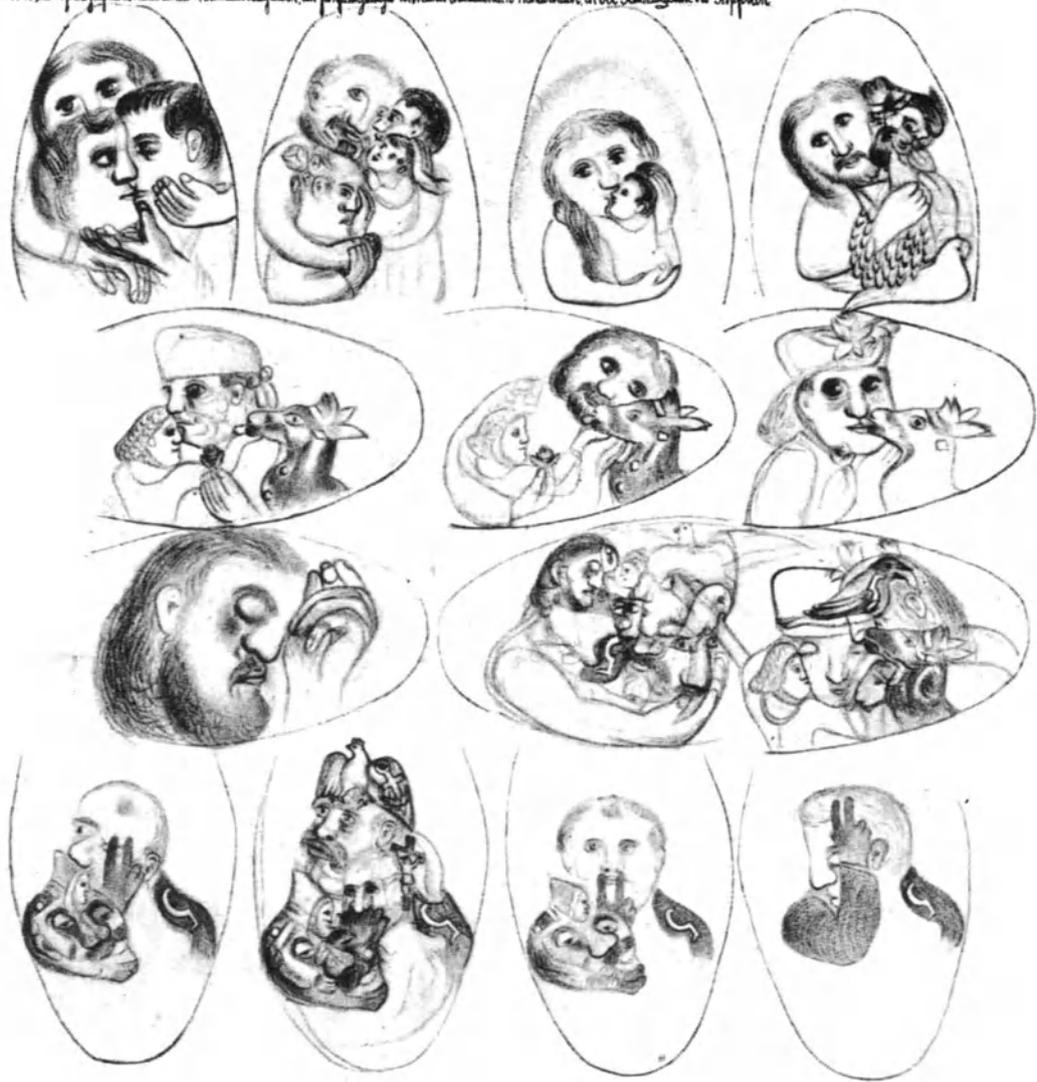


Case 15

Fig. 71. "Holy Sweat Miracle on the Insole" (Pencil).

84 × 55 cm.

Ein vielfaches Alliomenewelt, Die photographisch nachweisbar, ineinanderliegenden, ein fünfzigjähriges Kirchen enthaltenden, Menschenbilder, in der Schattenspiele des Sempfers.





Case 20

**Fig. 73.** "Church Light" (Water color).

47 × 73 cm.

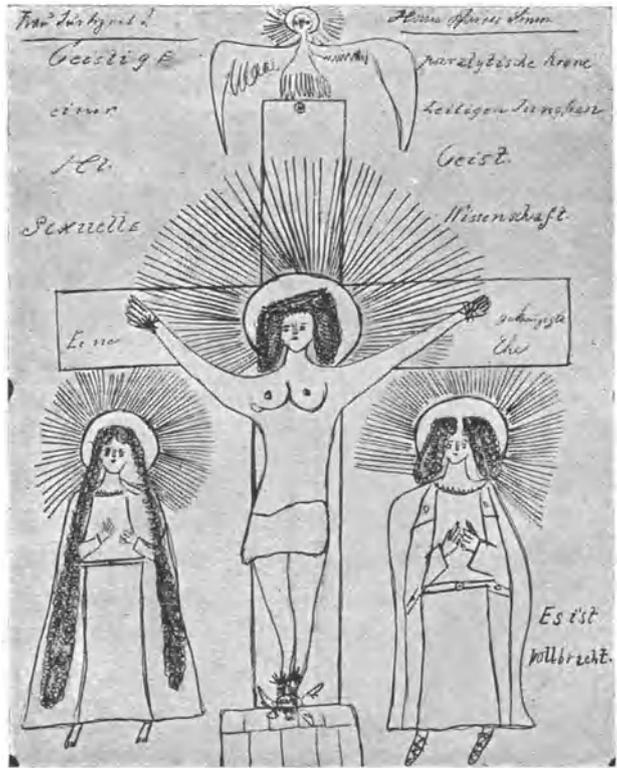


Case 174 **Fig. 75.** Pencil Drawing. 33 × 42 cm.

death he left a number of notebooks with numerous subtly painted watercolors of the same kind as that shown in the reproduction, as well as extremely voluminous written accounts in poetry and prose couched in extremely stylized and oracularly dark language.<sup>27</sup> Figure 78 reproduces one of the most appealing, symbolically overladen pictures. It is constructed almost pedantically in strict symmetry, despite the luxuriantly rich motifs. We shall study these motifs, beginning at the bottom. The upended crosses stand for the threatened faith, as other pictures also suggest, and the bell which is turned up probably has a similar meaning. Sickle and skull are fixed in great contrast on the pretty pattern of yellow chicks, symbols of creation and growth. The light lower part of the drawing is especially full. On the left someone prays on a sack of gold; on the right sit a man and a woman who are chained to each other back to back by golden rings. The animal in the center may be the golden calf, in front of which an inverted candlestick, with a moon sickle pointing down, holds a cross instead of a candle. One of the two naked figures who flank the cross while standing on an undefined floor bears a small skeleton in his raised hand, the other a human head. The inscription, "Sinful faith imprisonment without legal right," may be intended for all these figures. The bright green part looks somewhat like a relief map and has two buildings on the horizon beside which is inscribed,

<sup>27</sup> This case is especially rewarding because of the thorough-going parallels of its written, often concisely phrased observations to the extremely finely executed colored pictures, and it will shortly be published in a monograph. However, it imposes very difficult puzzles when it comes to the creation of symbols (tradition or spontaneous composition).



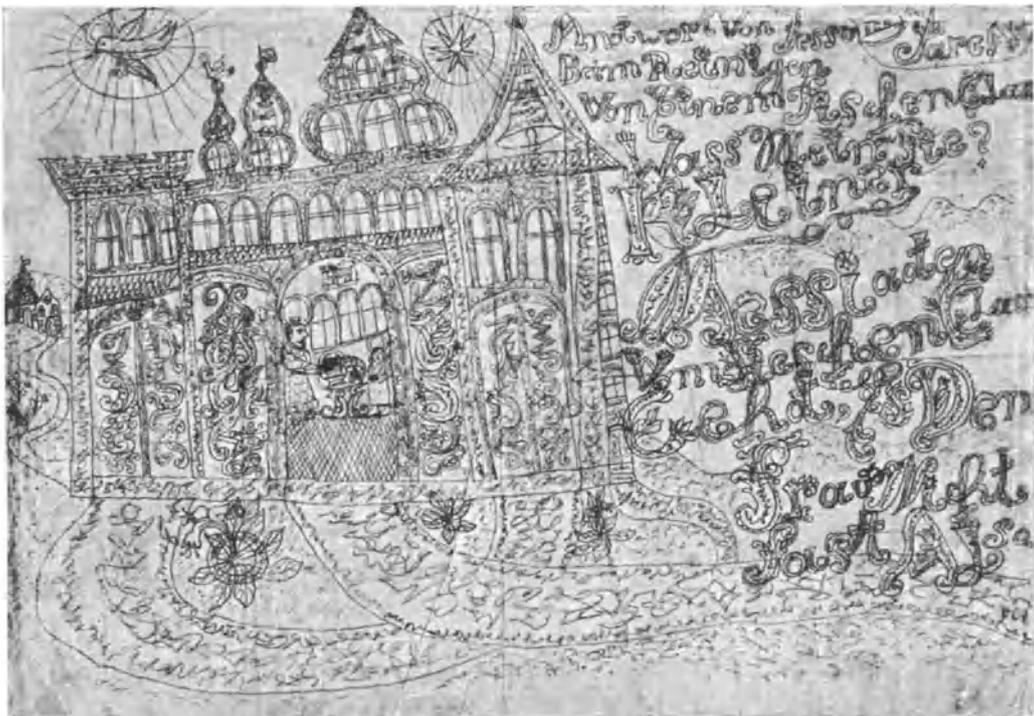


Case 174

**Fig. 76.**

42 × 66 cm.

Crucifixion Scene (Pencil).



Case 110

**Fig. 77.** Jesus and the Fish Bowl (Pencil).

48 × 35 cm.

in keeping with their architecture, “For the Earth” on the left and “For Heaven” on the right. That these inscriptions are negated by being repeated, but in reverse, under the crossed red scepters and morning stars on both sides is a genuine schizophrenic game which stops at nothing. On the cloth held by the two suspended angels, which apparently hides a chalice, stand, one behind the other, a candlestick with a white cross and a smaller chalice in white outline, as well as the commandment numerals 1 through 10 in Roman numerals arranged in strange alternation, and “Corinthians 1 Chap. 13” (*viz.*, “when I spoke with the tongues of men and angels”). The profusion of small details can be left to the observer. The overall order of the picture is dominated by a division especially favored by the clockmaker which corresponds to his mystical and symbolic view of the world: the realm of sin is below, primarily in yellows, blacks, and greens; in it everything is turned around and men suffer from their impulses; to it also belong mating and giving birth, here represented by the chicks. At the top, on the contrary, in blues, reds, and greens is the realm of loyalty, innocence, and salvation.

The formal construction is distinguished by unusual sternness, which nevertheless does not become pedantic because of the great riches of motifs which often lead to the placement of various groups in contradistinction. The symmetrical connection of the picture’s halves to the center axis, which is progressively emphasized from bottom to top, is thereby somewhat loosened. The importance of the central axis is further lessened by the division of the whole picture into upper and lower halves which are quite contradictory in color blends and meaning. Every friend of art will be reminded of Philip Otto Runge who not only tried similar motifs – genies suspended in a chalice of light – in several drawings and pictures but who also favored the same division of the surface, namely one in which an edge with its own pattern of motifs surrounds the picture with its main representation. This order is also not infrequent in Persian miniatures and in addition appears often in medieval book decoration and later in western Europe. Despite these parallels in art the picture’s motifs and arrangement have such an original effect that we have no compelling reason to doubt the independent inventiveness of the artist.

The variety of the pictures produced by untrained mental patients has certainly been demonstrated by the material we have discussed so far – from the objective as well as from the configurative theoretical points of view. Even though we could extract the essential characteristics of our material without really considering the authors, the question nevertheless arises as to what mental state they are in to make such peculiarly exciting pictures. Perhaps individual psychological approaches will yet lead to insights into the pictures not provided by direct observation. Furthermore, every viewer will wish to have some idea of what these strange pictures are all about. Instead of enumerating and registering the main personality traits and symptoms of many patients and then perhaps deriving from them some typical qualities, we prefer to establish characteristics concisely in a few especially rewarding cases by drawing on all available sources. The reader will understand, if not necessarily approve, that because of the peculiarities of the material, medical histories and character sketches will be methodically interwoven. The usual case presentation with all its details seemed to us to drag in too much insignificant information for our problems, and a psychological sketch seemed deficient in provable findings and also too likely to turn into an overly vivid description of representative types. Such a description would seem only too convincing because every detail would already be adjusted to conform to the problem appearing at the end (*viz.* how did the man come to draw), and help to persuade the reader that we had unrolled for him a clear, logical, and complete picture. We see the perpetuation of such a fiction as a pious lie. Instead it seemed more honest



Case 34

Fig. 78. Allegorical-symbolic Work (Water color).

Original Size.

and important to retain the atmosphere of wonder or even absurdity in the personality of every living thing, especially when it is “disturbed.” We therefore preface the psychological descriptions of our 10 masters with a medical history in a suitably dull, objective form, and we pay heed to the fact that sociologically they are merely “institutional inmates,” “mental patients,” and objects of care by physicians and the state. We are not afraid to allow the glaring contrast between their physical social existence and their psychic one, which extends into the realm of culture without their “knowing what they do,” to stand.

## *VII. Ten Schizophrenic Artists*

### 1. Karl Brendel

Karl Brendel was born in 1871 in a Thuringian town, the son of a freight transporter who had eight other children, three sons and five daughters. Both parents lived beyond the age of 70 and seem to have been healthy. Nothing is known of any "nervous suffering" in the family. In 1906, at the beginning of his illness, Brendel reported the following facts about his own life. He had learned to walk and talk early and had shown no noticeable disturbances or pathological symptoms during his childhood. He grew up in the parental home and attended primary school between the ages of six and 14, making good progress because he learned quickly and had a good memory. He believes that he was a lively and affectionate child. After his schooling he learned bricklaying and was employed in various places, among them Westphalia and Lorraine. Recently he insists on having practiced different occupations: he had not only been a bricklayer but also a plasterer and a moulder in an iron foundry. In 1895 he married a widow with three children. From this marriage came two children of his own who in 1906 were described as physically and mentally sound. The marriage is said to have been good, but it ended in 1902 because of a prison term Brendel had to serve. After 1892 Brendel came into conflict with the law repeatedly and was sentenced 12 times for assault and battery, resisting arrest, libel, procuring, and property damage. In 1900 his left leg was crushed accidentally. Subsequently (whether in direct connection with the injury is doubtful) he had to submit to several operations on his leg in 1902, apparently because of abscess formation following boils. Finally most of the leg had to be amputated. He later had lengthy disagreements with the state workmen's compensation agency about his pension, during which he fought stubbornly for his interests. Otherwise he seems never to have been ill or suffered from venereal disease.

A county physician mentions the apparent beginning of Brendel's mental illness in a report dated October 2, 1906. The physician observed him in jail and subsequently allowed him, as a mentally ill person, the protection of paragraph 51 of the Civil Code when he was accused on June 30, 1906, of causing bodily injury and resisting arrest. In the report we read:

He is clear about the time, knows where he is, knows the officers, and demonstrates considerable schooling. Mostly he sits quietly in his cell, is in a good mood, and either reads much in books in which he always finds points of contact with his ideas, or writes down his experiences, particularly favoring metrical forms. In response to a question he at first answers correctly, but if one lets him continue he begins to express ideas that are at first in connection with the question and later quite senseless, which is due in part to feelings of persecution and in part to megalomaniac conceptions. The longer he talks the more confused his expressions become. But when one hears him more often one notices that there is no complete flight of ideas but that his thoughts always revolve around the same persons. He hears voices talk to him: 'I am the Emperor's brother, I am a monarch, what right do the clergy

have to make a Savior of me; the police is almighty God, Pastor Schmidt is the lawgiver, the clergy are the gravediggers.' People tried to poison him in all kinds of ways: 'Sulfur, lysol, alum, stag-well water, eye blinding, opium, arsenic'. His enemies used very peculiar means to kill him. His bed was covered with jewels, then plates had been attached to his head and an electric current conducted through him. In jail a ventriloquist constantly talks to him. All these things are expressed very much as a matter of fact, as if they were forgone conclusions. If one expresses doubt he says calmly 'Oh doctor, you don't understand.' He claims not to have visual hallucinations. Brendel always acted the same during the time of observation. It was never possible to conduct a rational discussion with him for even five minutes; he always digressed immediately. The officials of the jail, who as a rule made the same observations, also noticed his cheerfulness. A few times, however, he is said to have become greatly excited and abusive because of minor things.

Shortly thereafter, in November 1906, the history says:

Patient has until now remained quiet, his facial expression is cheerful, and he is always in a happy mood. He responds to all questions with great prolixity and verbosity, digresses easily, and goes from the hundreds to the thousands. He is well oriented in time and place; similarly, he gives the correct answers about his personal status. Day of the week? 'Wednesday, when the week is divided.' Why sentenced so often? 'That always happened because of the police.' Finally he was sentenced to a year and a month for causing personal injury. He is supposed to have beaten a woman but was innocent: 'Pastor Göbel wanted to throw all the people without touching them. At night he was around and put sulfur and lysol in my water.' He had often thought that the doctor had put morphine in his coffee. 'That was 1900 the ninth. 1903 they conducted a resurrection of Christ with me, by means of the archking and electricity. Many straps are attached to a large flywheel, one calls that the archking. In the evening they blew opium through my door and burned incense in front of the door, to take my breath away. I should leave my death for Pastor Göbel, a sacrificial death.' He had stated that he had received his punishment unjustly, that he had not beaten his wife. Voices? He had heard voices; 'judging by the voice it had been Pastor Göbel whether I wished to acknowledge the law, the court, and the police.' He knew that from the good tidings and reading. Happy? 'Oh yes, always very cheerful.' Persecuted? 'Yes, on the way, when I wanted to go from Barmen to Mühlhausen. They wanted to stab me to death treacherously. They called out, "If you go there we'll kill you."' Pastor Göbel represented Jesus Christ; he could open the heart chambers for all men for seven millennia; he had the right keys.'

But the harmless sociability noted here is of short duration. After a few days Brendel interjects himself precipitously into everything happening around him; he abuses and threatens so that he has to be transferred several times to other departments. His behavior changes repeatedly in the course of the winter: again and again the times when his behavior is quiet, orderly, obliging, and cheerful are interrupted by states of excitement in which he becomes loud and belligerent. At such times his expressions are filled with delusions of various sorts, especially megalomania, *e. g.*, "I am Jesus Christ himself, I work for emperor and empire, I am victor in Christ, I do not have to recognize emperor or king," etc. Unfortunately we have no reports from this time about any sensory delusions. In the spring of 1907 Brendel was transferred to another institution where he has remained. There too his mood and corresponding behavior change as described. The medical history now gives somewhat more detailed reports. Once again delusions about his person are prominent: he owns a principality, a duchy, or a kingdom. Added are experiences which indicate delusional interpretations of physical sensations: he had already once experienced sacrificial death. People claiming to be orderlies had broken his bones and

choked him. He suffered from peculiar bodily sensations due to alien influences. His fasting points to a fear of poisons. He conducts excited conversations with himself, is loudly abusive, and threatens beatings — in short, he shows most of the signs of an acute hallucinatory psychosis.

At the same time, however, a group of symptoms appears which makes it probable that a protracted prior state preceded the acute illness which an expert would already have been able to diagnose by exact testing. Brendel is extremely mannered and confused in his outward behavior as well as in his language. He uses “a lot of newly coined, mostly quite incomprehensible words.” The progress of the illness proves that we are not dealing with an acute advance of an illness also having phases of remission, but with an almost steadily advancing process which does not lead to a definite conclusion like the final state of schizophrenia. Brendel’s behavior has changed little more in almost 15 years than his attitude toward the outside world. Time and time again strong states of excitement clearly related to hallucinations make communication difficult with this otherwise willing, cheerful, and (despite his confusion) very handy man. He must therefore always live in a guarded house and cell where he can be easily isolated during times of excitement, whereas normally he moves among the other patients and makes himself useful in keeping house.

During two interviews we conducted in the institution in 1920 and 1921 Brendel was very approachable and talkative. His huge figure, moving on one leg in quick, whipping jumps, offers a grotesque appearance. His somewhat pinched face with its deeply set, bright eyes reminds us of Strindberg in his later years. When Brendel speaks vitality is evident in his extremely quick and precise mimicry, which shows traces of the actor. An equally pregnant language of gestures accompanies it. Everything he says he depicts with his whole body and with such expansive movements that one readily believes the orderlies when they claim that five men can hardly cope with him when he is excited and trying to throttle a fellow patient who annoys him. Although he seems to respond readily to a partner in conversation it is nevertheless hard to gain even one consistent sentence from him. He immediately turns to expansive tales, becomes lively, mixes in confused expressions and neologisms, and in a few seconds is deep within his personal conceptual world. His speech, aside from his own words, is just as pregnant as his gestures. Even in the midst of peculiarly confused thought complexes he succeeds in numerous general philosophical expressions which are quite to the point. At the most intense times his behavior has about it something genuinely and grandly demonic, not in the sense of pathos but of an almost wild cynicism, which violently transforms all his experiences into playthings for grotesque and capricious inspirations.

During all of his illness Brendel has been completely oriented as to time and place, a fact also emphasized explicitly in the history covering his first acute hallucinatory phase. His memory is very good; he knows how to reproduce immediately even remote experiences and memories, like the address of a brother 15 years earlier. The extensive mention of contemporary events in his more recent writings shows that his memorizing ability is well preserved. Nothing certain can be said about the reliability of his memory in retaining the interrelationships of his experiences, their meaning or causes, etc., but the sources of the uncertainty are various. Because his attitude to the world has long been determined by hallucinations we cannot be sure that he incorporated sense experiences as soberly as would a normal person, even as far back as the beginnings of his illness, *i. e.*, some years prior to its becoming apparent in 1906.

Once the mind begins to dissociate itself from the sensible, perceptible world, when

every simple impression can be fantastically intensified far beyond its rational meaning so that it is charged with significance or the supernatural, then the door is opened for a retroactive reformation of experiences which were originally quite simple: memory falsifications and confabulations of all sorts will overwhelm the “objective” pith of experience – if we may use such words. In fact it is completely impossible in Brendel’s case to gain certain information about any event in his life. We easily obtain a few formal data like time, place, and personal names, but as soon as real issues are revealed he slides away into his chaotic world which remains accessible to us only in fragments, and which poses the greatest difficulties to careful analysis. Nevertheless, the attempt must be made with the help of Brendel’s oral and written statements before we undertake to follow up individual psychopathological phenomena.

Of Brendel’s writings we have two thick notebooks closely inscribed in pencil, as well as some 30 single sheets and letters. Most of them come from recent years, but a few pieces are dated earlier. A few examples are more revealing than any descriptions. An appeal to the department physician in November 1906 states:

Since I followed my duty and depended on it that my industrial accident was made report after the thirteenth week by Brendel the invalid insurance agency was obligated to let the guild know, also a prison, because the same suffered injury, to let the guild know not to throw the poor man out, when the same is transferred to a hospital for an operation, then the prison steps up and says he has had no accident with us, he should blame the clergyman; why has the clergyman sent the poor man to the doctor for an operation. Since the clergyman is not the living Jesus after all, also not my God the clergy only steals with strong healthy people makes work, through the himmottising, again as far as the servants of the clergy are concerned, the people too diffuse, those are the fortune-tellers, that’s what happens when the man keeps his mouth shut, the voice then continues, is to say ventriloquist what other people are given fears, the poor man brings a fury, when he is in the middle he loses his strength, so the poor people are strongly urged by the doctor to eat heartily.

June 1912:

Magnificent love; Heavenhell in subterranean grounds of deepfession in trade to bring coal gas heaven rain naphtha fasstha rain water to earth on the edge polish with the cult capabilities which one pumps out of the head through lightning thunder hail current thunderstorm under the creature of the Omnipotent Omniscient. Drives in essence through clouds air wind draft in the Zitone Bonjobilato whirl through the howl over nut South East North West through ball snake sign in the visibility, with that on its side came Herscht Ahtrobant Light who heareth the groaning in the glow body Vaktior Poesie therefore flood Zion’s people call to the searchlight in syllables unfruitfulness, in word chrystal in his Alone observation in direction of his leadership in the Pastoror Jugjektief Whitehorse. Frakekatur brave heroes Abbot Ab in the population. Light mentally ill named in poison house. Social guild through the treasure friend. Hipschmann please by Drumo Bart Elbert without these others noticed in the plague nice taste love can things. Eggwhite vinegary strakes wine extract bloodsteel eicksstract mopfjum opfjum goulard justiformpowder gloriform tin lead water flowing Höhnstein rutting water stag water. Oh how many more things I have...

April 1919:

... gentlemen, I request the korratie, who likes it, the laws to the burden rest, to the fikuri, but to that point I am this moment, already in reference, on 22. 4. 07 transferred to a

hospital over from the amputation, my left leg the hip and nervousness paid retur, in whom the hands that made the operation my chief Bardeleben, and no caretaker institut a burden to the memory. I avoided the penalty for necessity...

In 1919:

From a heath! In a desert, grass, weeds and fruitful trees have grown over it, the speech and after the resurrection, it is the same desert of God, recognized, acknowledgment Zirte Asspotomj; Soul from God; lead yourself you t; in Holy Ghost live forever, and not from independent ghost, in an unseeable time, for your doing and being in an attractive person sickly experienced you go mad, we exercise in a South pole parrik in the yuquistriwierdigen lifesetting power forever lio lomathi reflexs rogeen rerenz lelenz Afent from God in heaven a Masascec over people of the earth memesser from a Guiahnuss nobody thinks, were out it long, planet is white light in comet the earth from Kompaden heard Ziliede a gang diplomat, lio is the highest horizon what no affair God; Stiry Dexterry. Indanz J. Subdanz Joryom, the world stands like Asstromj. April has from eleven month 101. Eklebtisie, persecution spirit destruction from an insane person, with other spirits joke and story thereon axtrezirt, aretirt mentally ill, on which it believes to be healed you are in eternity from you leiteine lorelei by suffering from infrorenz from God in heaven to war on earth his emperor respected the world not yet at the place of rest preserved always!...

From a notebook:

One question, so all animals are related with human spirit but only thereby since the human spirit more effectively on the animals pulls up to do the human sounds to live to insight the animals in the spirit soul innocence in humans understand to judge the animals on earth for thunderstorm shy like human farm to the animals the spirit for people from the country animal one keeps...

On a yellow sheet:

I insist here with once more respectfully that I am not entitled my home quiets some place or other because of the strong cross, nailing, which is done to Brendel, just as the protestant & the catholic clergyman also publicly in the sacrificial cross leaves the place so also he down there climbs makes the same play in underclothes... So also the physician who scratches nails in a person on the table also on another post where the masts and ships stand highest in the eyes world so have the caretakers have let the trilch and shoes be polished by the clergyman and doctor...

Brendel's handwriting (see Figure 168) is quite crude, illegible, deliberate, and contains rounded strokes. We can hardly speak of correct language. The simplest words appear in a spelling peculiar to him (*e. g.* he always writes "woh" instead of "wo"), and in some sections capital letters appear just as often in the wrong as the right places. He spells a great number of words phonetically as they are pronounced in the Thuringian dialect, *e. g.*, "kleicher Massen" instead of "gleichmässig" (uniform or even), "Sitzblatz" instead of "Sitzplatz" (seat), "irtisch" instead of "irdisch" (earthly), and "betekt" instead of "bedeckt" (covered). These peculiarities are completely normal. Many people with little schooling write that way. But as soon as we look at his sentence construction our usual scale no longer applies. Simple, comprehensible, and complete sentences do not

occur at all. Whenever a sentence has a rational beginning it soon changes into an endless chain of words, often with the appearance of grammatical connections, and ends only when a full sheet is covered, with an accidental period. The grammatical devices used in the melange of words are highly primitive. Complete declarative sentences, in which objects and subjects are connected by verbs, as well as adverbial sentences, do occur, but only as minor parts of the texts. Adjectives cannot be found in many paragraphs. If, however, the word groups, which must be understood as conceptual complexes, often appear as irregular associative ideas, without formal linguistic connections, a closer investigation will nevertheless easily disclose some grammatical rules which impose themselves mechanically on the writer without being suitable to the content he wishes to express. Such rules are not particularly characteristic in Brendel's case but can be found in most cases of "speech confusion and incoherence," as in the following: "Speech through the air in which artificial answer is let say, in which draft nearness & lets carry the fruit of fruits in the Hot Ocean of the load others help, in which persistent staying power thought about, invented, in the year milling around earthrunning," etc.

No proof is needed that the preposition "in," used five times to connect conceptual complexes, which may be understood spatially or in a transferring, conceptually subsuming sense, is not intended literally. We must rather take it as either a completely meaningless device for stringing together such freely associated complexes or assume that it implies a number of meanings, such as "whereupon," "whereby," "in which then," "through," (*i. e.* in that thereby), and "in order." Similar connective formulations are "however," "who however," and "not" (simple antithesis). Finally there is the simplest device available for loosely arranging concepts in sequence which is typical for the speech of children and children's fables – and for the Bible – the "and." An analysis of conceptualizations joined together so indifferently leads to an understanding of only a few complexes. Nevertheless it becomes rewarding to make the attempt, which in Brendel's case appeared to be quite useless at first, because at least a part of the conceptual life becomes clear from the fragments of understandable sentences.

Let us take a section mentioning Pastor Göbel, which is admittedly especially transparent.

Pastor Göbel letter carrier son I hit him and did not know that he was pastor in the prison, I have him on very also yet belted hartmann, a Thuringian shoemaker, so also here in X this same as example false fact sentence I call on my leg in heaven. For the reception X. pardon the neighborhood for the hermit from me the truth you my sworn teut est, oh you mansarte victims why I wanted to defy the clergy we no invalid pension came. A lamb holds still as Brendel did the doctor in hospital did whom to trust I self for me, the catastrophe a step, I saw my death before my eyes...

Verbal and other written evidence shows that Brendel apparently took action in prison against the clergyman visiting him and against orderlies, a fact also mentioned briefly in the judgment of 1906, which does not name persons. The sentence then becomes easily understandable as far as "Hartmann a Thuringian," except for the insert "letter carrier son," which seems to refer to the pastor and is due either to a case of mistaken identity (which might explain the attack) or a playful associative insertion (*e. g.*, because of a similarity of names or external appearances between the pastor and the son of a letter carrier known to the patient). As for the rest, the contextual and grammatical references of this sentence, which hardly exceed folksy, common speech, are clear. "Shoe-

maker, so also here in X. this same” means: “Sh., who is a guard here in X., judges it [mistaking the pastor?] as a delusion. I call on my leg in heaven [that this is not true]; the reception in X. brought pardon from the neighborhood for the hermit; you interpret [teut est = deutest?] the truth perjuringly; I defied the clergy as victim because they will give me no invalid pension.” Only the word “mansarte” remains completely unintelligible.

If we peruse Brendel’s writings this way we find primarily the following conceptual complexes: his accident, the operations and the amputation of the leg, but especially the battle for the pension recur among purely biographical facts. Bitterness against the clergy is mixed in repeatedly. In relation to them he considers himself a victim, apparently because, while he was in the hospital, they should have worried about a timely application for a pension – their failure is supposed to have resulted in its loss.

A whole complex of memories and delusions, indivisibly intertwined, is attached to the surgeon von B., who treated Brendel for an extended period and now plays a semi-divine role in his mind, somewhat like that of an army captain in the life of a farm boy who served him as an orderly during his entire term of service. In fact Brendel seems to have been very active during the long period which he had to spend in the hospital. Many medications and surgical instruments are quite familiar to him, although they are often difficult to recognize in such distortions as “Barfimsalbe” (*i. e.* Paraffin), “Jutiform” (Jodoform, iodoform), and “Brangasse” (Brandgaze, burn gauze). Recently he has insisted that he learned from and worked with von B. as an attendant as far back as 1889. Unfortunately we cannot establish for certain what is true and how far the fantasizing tendency is effective which always weaves a web of confabulation around personalities important in the life of any person, particularly a schizophrenic!

In any case, for Brendel the surgeon von B. is the representative of the grand time of his life, when he counted for something and was appreciated and treated in a considerate and even comradely way by an important man. His self-esteem probably reached its peak during these days when he was still mental healthy. Their emotional impact appears more lasting to us than the rude physical fact that he lost his leg at this time. The other result of his stay in the hospital is probably more relevant: he gained a considerable fund of knowledge about the care of patients and of physiology generally, which later gave him a foundation for his fantastic conceptualizations.

Brendel’s statements about his marriage are not so easy to understand. Mostly he confines himself to veiled allusions. He “describes” something only once:

A widow fails attempt no life to lead with him [*viz.* does not master the attempt to finish her life without one?] to go on young man, to visit, how he does it, how it demands, in the comfort, sympathy – is so cheeky with the young man, as if nothing had happened that in the world has a law. Then the fresh love proceeds as with the first and last evening meal for a determined time – so the doctor and director and pastor are addressed about the objection question...

In another place he notes some dates from his marriage: “wedding, 1895, children born 1897; 1898; 1900; 1903,” and other data hard to identify. In the main women seem to exist in his mind as active personalities against whom a man has a hard row to hoe. Any statement which would hint at a certain attraction to the family is not known. Just as hard to recognize is whether his gross sexual fantasies (more about these later) played a role before the beginning of the illness.

A third group of ideas includes the experiences from the acute hallucinatory phase of his illness and apparently from the day of his last arrest. Brendel gave the most explicit and complete description of this day during an interview we had with him in May 1920. Part of it runs as follows:

In Lorraine, sir! There I suddenly became so fearful, I almost shit in my pants, I tapped like a blind king, trembled like a dog... a lot of people with cows come along – just the eyes can be seen – it was night, I begged at a house and continued toward the forest – a nightingale began to sing – suddenly a cover rose before me – a few people crawl out! – quickly, keep going – heard whistling shot – lay in the field as if dead – then a man comes toward me and says: ‘You, man, you haven’t eaten for a long time, I’ve brought you something from Berlin.’ Suddenly I see a girl in the bush with a deer, they take off, I behind them through the bushes – they are gone. Then the police come to me and said: ‘Relax a little,’ then I already had a wireless station and felt each surge and current in the whole wire... Everywhere in the forest there is a whistling and hissing, Lord, was I afraid! In the evening we were at an inn, so I ask, as I am, the woman will not really have a cold? Hupp, they’ve got me and I’m gone – In jail they said: out with it, boy, you have stolen! – laid my pipe on the table – and then it itched and bit in it as if it wasn’t all there.” – “In an inn it is written on a ring that the son lies in bed with the mother – and they wanted to knife me – I home and beat him up! – ha, that sounded good! – everything goes rrrr in the head – I grabbed the knife, ah – then Lorraine was mine – I run, hide in a house – just happens to be the one the policeman lives in, and I hear him make it with his wife – I wrote that down and stuck it on the door – he swore! – at that time everyone listened in on me and was full of traders and crooks, that was a catastrophe!

He says the following about the appearance of the manhole cover in the woods:

Those are people who lived in a tunnel in order to found themselves a Napoleon – one can do that when one has the auxiliary troops – in the cell I once beat a clergyman because he held a key in his hand and wanted to shoot with it.

He says about the year 1906, that he had learned to see hidden ghosts then whom not everyone can see:

When one walks outside one always see them... in the black water one sees exactly that a lot of murders have occurred, – Black Forest stories – the sky above it is a moth or maggot when it is white – At night people make noises in caves and wells, when we sleep; one can go there if one has courage and a string; I do not rely on magic... Either war, death or life, or surrender; war or the cross... Jesus, (that is Pastor Göbel) he has a table, on it are lots of heads and swords on the cross, then the heads begin to speak, jump to the earth and up again by electricity – one must not let it frighten one and become ill.

One often finds fragments of similar thoughts in his writings.

Finally, the memories of the time of his institutional stay should be recorded separately. It may be assumed that they are always influenced by the delusions to which he is subject to the present day. All the more must it be emphasized that he has the use of a multitude of objectively correct data which throw a bright light on the eagerness with which he receives news about persons close to him. He especially likes to cite details from the private lives of his physicians; he knows where they studied, knows about their families, and in general likes to converse with them as colleagues. He is never deluded about

the physicians. On the contrary, his medical history emphasizes time and again how he went to the aid of physicians, even when he himself was excited, when other patients became threatening. He has a different attitude toward the attendants; like other patients in a phase of hallucinatory excitement he accuses them of maltreatment, especially sexual abuses, during the first period of his illness. How much he was occupied with and suffered from sexual fantasies, perhaps in the form of genuine hallucinations, appears from the statement that for weeks he had made wild abusive threats in the direction of a physician's house because, he claimed, a naked woman was always showing herself there. Those are the only really vivid experiences we know about in Brendel's life. To conclude, we must draw up a basic sketch of his psyche, his temperament, and his fund of knowledge, in which the symptoms differing from the normal will automatically become noticeable.

Brendel is an extremely expansive man with lively emotions and a generally cheerful disposition. He lacks the capacity to fit himself into the existing society, work consistently, or feed his family. It is highly probable, if not provable, that he was always inclined toward fantasy. His irritability which, given his somewhat autocratic and strong nature, so easily led to conflict with the law, also indicates this, and so does the lack of inhibition which apparently antedated his psychosis. Basically he strives for an active grasp on the world, for a full life, for power, and for knowledge. The erotic drive in his behavior is easily proved. On the other hand, he completely lacks an appreciation of religion. Nevertheless, we seem to find a creative power at work in him which cannot be traced back further and which already achieves a high level in his gesticulations, especially when he describes events. It also exists in his awkward speech and generally takes charge of every imaginable object – only to do violence to it. As far as we can judge today Brendel originally had a good, perhaps better than average, intelligence, which, however, was never allowed full play because of his unsteadiness. Even today we sense a certain sureness and quickness of grasp in the midst of all his confusion. The asylum praises his adroitness and inventiveness in the execution of all kinds of practical work. We also find that he often hides perceptive judgments about men and things in jumbles of barely understandable words.

We have now pictured the basic traits of Brendel's personality and intelligence rather broadly without mentioning his illness. We are in doubt just where the pathological diverges from the normal. Anyone who has read any of his writings cannot doubt that his intelligence has suffered damage. The only question is whether the damage really was done to the function of intelligence itself or to the contents of his mind. We already investigated and simply described the memories at his disposal. One might still ask how far his ideas diverge from the usual. We must consider his genuine hallucinations explicitly pathological and investigate them more closely. They seem to have been particularly vivid at the outset of the psychosis in 1906; according to the description spontaneously written by Brendel in May 1920, a mass of visual and acoustical hallucinations broke in upon him to which vast reinterpretations of objective perceptions were apparently added, so that he fell into a rapture of fear and later, in a state of excitement, became violent at the inn. The primary delusional experience, in which the supernatural and paranoia predominated, is still so vivid in his imagination that even now he gets excited in telling about it. In other words, he is still unable to recognize the delusory quality of his acute hallucinations and has no critical attitude toward it, or, to express it positively, apparitions appear to him having all the qualities of the real: puzzling, eerie manhole covers open up out of the forest floor, people and animals disappear into the bushes, there are hissing, whistling, and shooting sounds in the air which make one fearful, a

policeman brings food from Berlin, etc. We know that more recently naked women have appeared to him and that a mermaid with a body shaped like a phallus hops around daily in the grass as well as the room.

Furthermore, he has numerous abnormal physical sensations: in a primary experience he has “a whole radio station in his body and feels every surge and current in the whole line.” He often feels a tickling and stabbing in his body, especially the genitals; his food tastes of all kinds of chemicals, mostly poisons, etc. A large number of single experiences are paranoid: the pastor wants to shoot him, often orderlies and fellow patients are suspected of wishing him ill, and Christ wants to crucify and poison him. Although we must imagine that his cognition is shaken, enriched, and filled with eerie experiences, his nature nevertheless does not let him be delivered up to them helplessly. Instead he opposes stronger powers to the oppressive, overpowering outside world which his understanding can no longer master: suddenly we find the bricklayer fully prepared to fight the world with magic and witchcraft.

Many of his expressions could come unchanged from the mouth of a primitive, as for example his description of mirror magic: “The sun is a ‘korbel,’ that is to say a curve. It turns extremely fast. If one holds on one can cut off a man’s head with it or his kidneys, one calls that the hard stroke – then the sun is death, a South Pole-Parix. Or one does it with a mirror in the shade. There one can catch a ray, cripple a man with it, or strangle his neck with it. If he then admits his guilt one can release him again – otherwise he must die.” Besides using simple magic to transform or destroy a person who is present he can also force distant persons into surrender, also by using a mirror and a magnifying glass. “One can also make hypnosis distantly effective to the end of the world.”

To sum up: schizophrenic main traits fit so well into Brendel’s character that the change of personality does not seem to reach as deep as usual. Cases like his suggest that certain types maintain their integrity better vis-a-vis the schizophrenic process than others and raise the question which traits are important. Brendel has certainly retained or acquired an unusually rich store of vivid conceptions despite his autistic turn away from the outside world, as shown by his works, to which we now turn.

As nearly as we can determine, Brendel had already been inclined to form objects and to carve earlier. He claims that as a bricklayer he helped with stucco work. Furthermore, he says that he has formed sculptured decorations for wardrobes and other pieces of furniture out of blood and sawdust, and that his technique had worked very well. His statements cannot be verified and are doubted by his family. A process of molding plastic decorations out of a mixture of blood and sawdust actually exists and is being industrially exploited. Brendel not only carved picture frames for his children (in vulgarity they may not have been far behind those widely made during the war) but he also carved dolls. His wife had liked his carving and always encouraged him. He also claims to have worked for a long time as a molder in an iron foundry. At any rate, his statements indicate that in his occupations he had ample opportunity to practice shaping things out of soft materials; it probably encouraged his consciously plastic conception of the outside world to an unusual degree. On the other hand, his own inventiveness played almost no role, perhaps because he was only a helper in occupations that were strange to him.

The whittling for his children is different. In it his modeling is spontaneous and he tries to realize eidetic images, no matter how simple (a piece of wood, given shape by a few cuts, can become a doll!). If his statements are true – one is never quite sure whether for some reason he does not project his present activity back into the time of his family life – we would have to concede that when he took up whittling again he was not totally

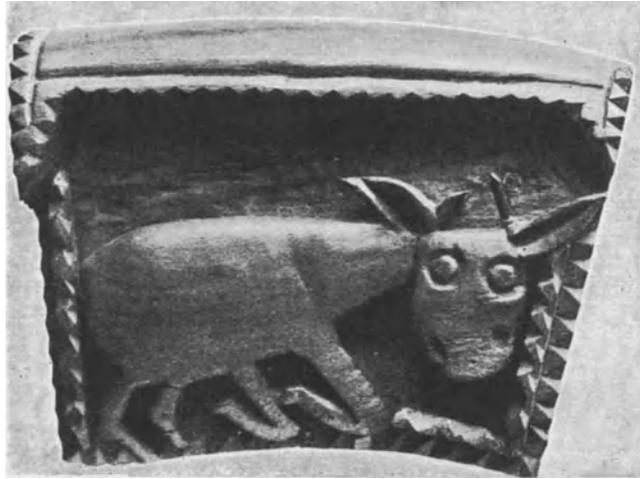
untrained but had a certain technical skill and some experience with the conditions and possibilities of configuration. Inquiries made of the family have of course brought no confirmation at all for any of these claims. A quite clever sister-in-law, who gave detailed and convincing reports about Brendel, knew nothing about any artistic inclinations but rather thought that he would never have enough patience. Therefore, even if we conscientiously wish to take into account that Brendel had whittled earlier, we cannot really give much importance to his prior skills.

In the asylum Brendel began to model figures out of chewed bread during 1912 and 1913 which, according to information from the physicians and older attendants, were distinguished mostly by obscenity. Nothing remains of these early attempts. The only piece made from bread, the head in Figure 79, is one of the earliest surviving. It is painted with lime so that we can distinguish it from a plaster head only by touch. The neck, formed like a column and blending into a kind of plate, like the base of a vase, indicates that it is possibly derived from such three-dimensional objects. The head itself is little formed. Only the protruding, strongly diverging eyes are carefully and almost realistically shaped. These eyes heighten the disquieting effect of the piece, especially in contrast with the three gruesome mouth slits which we are now also inclined to accept as realistic. The cranium is missing. Instead we see the exposed furrows and wrinkles of the brain which, however, run from the front to the rear. Explanations about the origins of the "Pystie" (*i. e.* Büste, bust) could not be obtained. At about the same time he seems to have started his woodcarving. The physician in charge of his section at the time, who encouraged Brendel's inclinations, reports that he did not make any tentative attempts but showed his characteristic style from the very beginning. Models never interested him, even when they were expressly given to him. When later he was once shown reproductions of works of art from various periods he especially liked the Egyptian ones.

The first of his carved pieces in the Heidelberg collection is, as far as anyone knows, the modest animal in Figure 80, which is made from a flat piece of mahogany (apparently from a piece of furniture, because the reverse side is polished). The animal, which cannot be further defined by its shape, is seen from the side, and turns its flat, wide head completely so that we see its front. The large ears and short horns indicate the head of a



Case 17                      **Fig. 79.**                      24 cm.  
Head (Bread, kneaded).



Case 17

**Fig. 80.**

14.5 × 11 cm.

The Gentle Animal (Wood).

cow. The front legs are bent—the animal seems to kneel. The relief's formal impression is one of extraordinary constraint. The original extent of the board is carefully retained to determine the picture's limits, and a forward plane, a proscenium frame, is built, so to speak, by the use of the moldings retained at the top and those attached and slightly notched elsewhere, beyond which the curvature of the relief does not extend. This border is discontinued just below the feet and thereby escapes being misunderstood as a spatial limitation, such as a stall. Because of its discontinuity it cannot be taken as a picture frame, either; it constitutes only part of the constraint, namely the exterior, material part. The animal's parts of and by themselves bear the same uncertain character, even when we do not relate their contours to the closely pressing edge. The back is drawn out as an almost pure horizontal and even continues on almost steadily as the upper edge of the forehead, although the bases of the ears and horns interrupt the formal continuity.

The outline of the belly of the peculiarly pear-shaped trunk, which reminds us of insect bodies, also runs in a very simple curve, sinking steeply from the fleetingly emphasized tail to the hindmost upper leg, then bending and rising gently to eye height. The four legs, divided into hind and front pairs only by their divergence, and not by distance or overlaps, appear as indentations of the contours. All formal details, of the legs as well as the body, and all realistic proportions conforming to those of any real animal, are lacking. The two pairs of legs are coordinated only by their strict parallelism. If the bent forelegs were stretched out the cow would closely resemble a giraffe. Finally we come to the huge, flat head, as broad in the forehead as at the mouth, with large, circular button eyes which seem to look out at us as if through eyeglass frames, with a soft, somewhat staring wonder. The nostrils are widely separated and uneven in height; a mouth can be discerned only from a steep top view. The huge ears, between which two pitifully small horn stumps converge as the only details distinctly separated from the background, spread out instead of standing up.

A superficial view of the outline (it is most instructive to trace it) might make it appear that it was done by a child, but the closer our acquaintance with it becomes the more surely do we sense a difference, which nevertheless is hard to describe. Common

to Brendel's work and that of children is the lack of realism and the neglect of characteristic detail resulting from a lack of clarity and fullness of the eidetic image. Also common to both is the evenly progressing outline and the "enumeration," side by side, of the four legs in one plane, but then the paths divide. If we inspect the many animal drawings by children which are published and therefore accessible, we easily find a large number which appear to be comparable to Brendel's cow in eidetic image or configurative standard, but their outlines are much more vacuous and their body parts fall away as mere accidental accessories from the cylindrical bodies. The differences may be summed up as follows.

Brendel's kneeling animal, compared with the superficially similar animal representations of children, is distinguished, first, by its more determined contours combined with almost the same poverty of detail; secondly, by the arrangement of the body, which gives a convincing impression of an animal despite its unrealism (an impression which seems to result primarily from the balancing of the masses, *i. e.*, from a specific plastic consideration of spatial forms); thirdly, by the compelling execution of a strange motif, *viz.* the kneeling of an animal; and fourthly, by the logical relief shaping and composition, astonishingly natural and simple despite its severity, within the bordered plane. Now that we have surveyed the formal qualities of the work and have enumerated a whole series of facets to be evaluated, we may also ask how emotional tone can be communicated to the viewer directly in his experience of form, without having to fear that we will quickly succumb to mere impressions based on uncontrollable associations.

People having very different personalities agreed that as soon as they overcame their first start, during which they asked themselves whether the work was not simply an expression of childish incapacity, a feeling of mystery began to stir them more and more. Although there can be no doubt about the unrealism of the animal in which the details of a cow are only weakly indicated, the impression made by the creature is not merely one of a credible hybrid but of an organism whose simplicity is completely convincing. Not only does it seem to be a complete individual animal, but its anthropomorphous expression and physical attitude, particularly its kneeling forelegs which we vainly try to interpret as the kneeling which precedes lying down, exert a strong appeal. To put it even more simply, we are touched by a breath of that simplicity which stills us whenever we meet it, whether in the eyes of an animal, a child, or in the works of primitives and earlier cultures; it is more common to the East than to Europe.

It is unimportant whether Brendel consciously felt or thought what we feel; his animal relief contains an element of the emotion usually called the new animal myth, which we associate with Franz Marc. We have said nothing more than that Brendel's work, created far from the turmoil of daily life, behind bars, by an untrained, uneducated, rough and eccentric bricklayer, reminds many viewers of an emotional attitude apparent in the art of the last generation of which he could have had no inkling. And we showed earlier that his work maintains in its formal aspects a sovereign plastic balance of masses, a touching composition, a sure and convincing use of his unique relief technique without slipping into vulgar realism. It has qualities, in short, which one can describe only by using the language of art. To sum up: the picture communicates to the viewer a distinct psychical attitude by transforming a meager, childishly limited fund of natural forms into an apparently well planned, formal unity by artistic configuration. Our analysis may well rest temporarily with this result. When we ask Brendel himself for explanations of his work, we make a very normal discovery in turn; *viz.* that the author himself is often enough the least satisfactory interpreter of his configuration. In this case the discrepancy becomes grotesque because Brendel could say only one thing (except for an

incomprehensible sentence about Herod who liked to have cows in the pasture) and that was “the cow which goes the Catholic way.”

The larger, very flat wood relief, “The Physician at the Sick Bed,” (Figure 81), which is made of light brown pine, also goes back to the beginnings of his activity. The rough wooden plate is crisscrossed by deep furrows, but an impression of a certain orderliness is soon conveyed to the beholder despite all of its awkward roughness. This effect is due partly to the fact that the foreground is again the governing formal determinant and that there is no exact indication of depth. Depth is suggested only to the left of the head of the central figure by a deeper groove, which is immediately assigned a formal compositional value. It helps to accentuate the central figure, which is in any case amply emphasized by the numerous vertical lines at its back. The left half of the picture is closely related to the central figure, as shown not only by the curves of the relief but the fact that the figure faces to the left, and by the relationships of the contents. The lines radiating from the center to the right, in which the animal neck is included and into which even the inclined tree trunk may be integrated, unify the picture’s right half and yet subordinate it sufficiently to the whole.

The detail is on the same level of formal poverty as that of the humble cow. Nowhere is an attempt made to gain realism or characterize individual features. The man, identified as such by the lines converging below and the crossing lines in the middle of the figure (coattails?), and strongly emphasized, does not possess clearly outlined extremities. Only the huge nose and the eye can be called unambiguous. The smaller human figure lying with steeply raised arms on the bare beam marked “DO IX” could be interpreted as the Christ child, especially since an animal resembling a donkey supplements the scene in the right half of the picture. But the figure is rather large, and a nativity scene without the Virgin Mary would be absurd even for a schizophrenic. Brendel himself does allow this interpretation to stand unchallenged, but when he saw a reproduction of the work long after he had finished it he described it, as before, as “Doctor at the patient’s bed, under which stands a chamber pot.” The donkey, he said, is a deer; behind it is a tree, and between both a window.



Case 17

**Fig. 81.**  
“Physician at the Sickbed” (Wood relief).

21 × 13.5 cm.

The figure which accordingly must be understood as the patient has an arm which is almost realistic and which even terminates in the main outlines of a hand with four fingers. The other hand, shaped like a “W,” emerges from an indistinguishable confusion of curves. Brendel is uninformative about the intentions of the doctor. The most reasonable guess would be an amputation or at least the manipulation of the stump of a leg. At the same time Brendel’s sexual imagination may by its greater intensity have suggested a vaginal examination. One does not recognize the chamber pot below the beam immediately because its cylindrical roundness is represented concavely and its handle rises somewhat to the right. The inscription “DO IX” should probably be understood as an attempt to render the number of a year in Roman numerals, a kind of pompous affectation like the writing of notes by people who do not know music.

Stairs are one of Brendel’s favorite motifs, and they often appear in more recent carvings without ever having any clear purpose. He once mentioned during the description of his primary hallucinatory experience that a deer and a woman came out of the earth. Upon questioning, he admitted that they had climbed stairs, but he will not be pinned down to a connection with the stair motif in his pictures. Just the same we may grant this connection a high probability, especially because it exists in other works Brendel did at the same time, particularly “Deer and Woman.” It is worth emphasizing that his primary experience came to light only during the explorations of his frequently returning motifs, so that in this case the clinical usefulness of our material was proven.

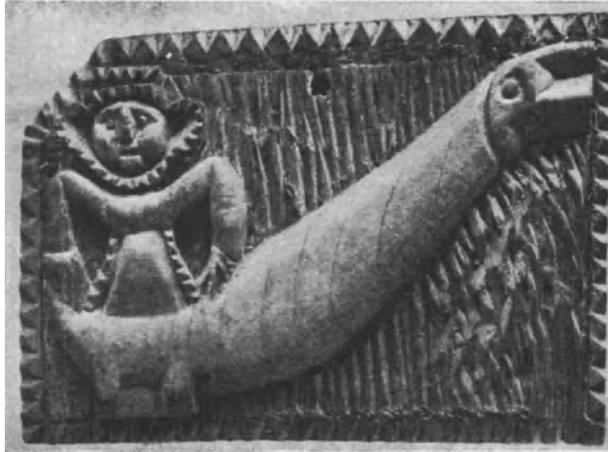
Just as the deer and the tree on the right side of Figure 81 surely refer to the hallucinatory scene, so do the deer and the woman in Figure 82, done in brown wood. Here the deer as the main figure looms over the whole surface out to all four edges, while behind its back a feminine face with a hoodlike frame and, below it, a broad, conical, feminine chest project straight forward from the background without any organic relationship to each other. In the lower right corner the inclined stairs appear again. We cannot say how closely the little tin bell on the neck of the deer, made by Brendel himself, is related to the sounds he heard during his hallucinations of 1906. The work’s character



Case 17 **Fig. 82.** 10.5 × 11.5 cm.  
Deer and Woman (Wood).



Case 17 **Fig. 83.** 17 cm.  
Pipe Bowl (Wood).



Case 17 **Fig. 84.** “Mermaid” (Wood). 17 × 12 cm.



Case 17 24 cm.  
**Fig. 85.** “Weather Prophet” (Wood).

is very similar to that of the two aforementioned ones. The wood is carved out a little deeper, so that the deer’s foremost hind leg even stands out from the background. The supplementary features have also been realized more independently by a stronger emphasis on their real volume so that, separated from the body of the deer by a deep trough, they gain a separate existence and by their lines create an arbitrary and even contradictory effect. The deer itself, on the other hand, is this time denoted so unambiguously by correct details that we must suspect the use of a model. The carriage of its head, the position of its legs, and above all the pointed hoofs and the sharply converging hindquarters are much more realistic than the shapes of the preceding reliefs.

Brendel’s most appealing creation is the “Pipebowl,” Figure 83 (maple lined with tin), because it combines formal dexterity with the greatest precision in its execution. The sure, variegated, and yet highly discrete carving technique demonstrated in this strictly symmetrical work as shown, for example, in the differing directions of the cuts and their depths, which are used to give vitality to the surface of the eagle, deserves mention. To do such a sophisticated sculpture justice we can compare it only to works from great cultures.

The only thing to be said about the fantastic figure called “Mermaid,” Figure 84 (maple), is what Brendel stated during an interview: “Mermaids or little waterwomen are here every day – in the meadow or in the room.” He denied any phallic meaning to the tail. A new trait appears in Figure 85. It is roughly assembled, as if from isolated body parts. Without regard to natural arrangement or continuity the fragments lie side by side, corresponding very little to the overall position of the figure, rather like bones in an ancient grave. The total form is determined by the volume of the wood strip used to make it, which is not extended by any additions. The proportions are those of all primitive representations of humans: a large head and short legs. This head with its helmet assumes more than one-third of the whole figure, while the distance from the

point indicating the bulge of the buttocks to the feet is barely one-quarter of the whole. Among the details the parts of the rump are most noticeable: a very low chest at whose lower edge the arms begin, a pear-shaped, hanging belly, and a support or tendon which rises from the buttocks. But the constellation of these parts becomes even more peculiar when we hear from Brendel himself that the pear-shaped appendage must be understood not as a belly but as a lung – notably for the schizophrenic reason that “the lung is outside because inside it would not do any good anyway.” That this is no momentary invention but a systematized idea is proved by the figure holding up the clock in Figure 91. A similar raglike attachment protrudes from its clearly recognizable abdomen, which Brendel also calls a lung. For the interpretation of the figure wearing the helmet (reminiscent of a combination of the Prussian spiked and the Bavarian crested helmets) only a later statement is available. Brendel calls the figure “with the globe helmet” a “weather prophet,” adding only the explanation about the lung being outside.

Much more rewarding is “The Crucified One,” Figure 86 (pine), in which the motif is presented unambiguously in the ancient tradition, so that in it the personal contributions of the carver, both of form and content, are shown more surely than in any other piece. The proportions of rump, head, and limbs are reasonably similar to those of the weather prophet. A very large head takes up almost one-third of the total length, and a small torso has an entirely separate chest separated by deep crosscut. The legs, on the other hand, are of almost normal length. The arms, fingertip to fingertip, also have normal reach, although the huge hands account for an unduly large part. The joining of these bootlike arms to the body is, however, one of the most peculiar traits of Brendel’s work.

The crossbeam, including the arms, is made separately, and is joined to the upright portion from behind. Brendel therefore faced the problem of how to join the pieces. It would have been natural for a rational and realistic man to give the arm stumps of the center part continuity with the outer arms attached to the crossbeam. A joint may then have remained visible which he might have hidden with a groove, whereby the natural organic unity of the body would have been assured. Brendel was apparently very



Case 17

**Fig. 86.**  
Crucifixion (Wood).

16 × 14.5 cm.

far from such considerations. As an alternative to such a naturalistic integration, which technically would have been feasible, we would have expected a superficial integration of the separately worked cross pieces and a later correction, but there is no sign of that either.

On the contrary, the technical difficulty gave Brendel no pause at all. Rather, he found in it formal inspiration. Of course we cannot reconstruct the actual workings of his mind, but the idiosyncrasy of the result speaks for itself. It makes no difference whether Brendel thought this or that when he solved his problem with the cross, or whether he just carved mindlessly; it is clear that his hand was guided not by any naturalistic inclination but by a tendency toward an unrealistic solution determined by the given forms, the stump and the joint. His attitude in turn made other variations possible: he could have carved the arms quite independently, without formal regard to the stumps, measuring only the distances so that they would connect. That would have resulted in a rough, formally senseless coordination without cohesion. What is decisive, however, is that the arms, looking like boot tops and absurd when judged realistically, and which extend like wide funnels from the jaw to the nipples, do not enclose the stumps but let them extend toward the front. This evasion is marked with only a simple, angular groove, yet the formally sensitive viewer, despite all his insight into these peculiarities, which resist any interpretation, cannot escape the impression that a configurative will is present to which he must submit, as we always submit to the configurative will when it appears to govern form in great works of art. The problems to which these considerations necessarily lead will be traced in the third part of this book.

The body of "The Crucified One" also has peculiar details. While the narrow waist and the breasts are feminine forms, a giant phallus, which like the knees has been given a kind of joint, signifies masculinity. Given the unrealism, the treatment of the legs as a soft, bending mass of the whole lower part is not surprising but consistent and appealing. All individual features are treated separately in the angular face: eyes, mouth, and chin appear as if added from the outside, and the thick cheeks are outlined like small sacks. The position of the brows and the mouth (with the upper lip arching up and the lower one flat) adds, with remarkable sureness, a painful expression to the face despite all its animalistic dullness. The carver's initials are scratched into the halo.

A further contribution to the lack of realism, that made by the upright cross, may not be noticed because its major quality, the vertical line, is shared also by the torso, while the horizontal line leaves the observer in no doubt about the primacy of the cross. What follows can be seen distinctly only from behind. On close observation the long beam can be distinguished as a board which in most places extends beyond the body and the head by a few millimeters. But – and here the overall conception is broken in favor of a formal impulse – this basic board (now no longer the upright of a cross) is cut out in curves which freely parallel the contours of the body. Toward the back the board is rounded off, and in the lower part the lateral indentations are continued so far onto the plane that they create the impression of a one-dimensional figure with three-dimensional feet. This strange trait can hardly be interpreted other than as evidence of an excess of configuration beyond the natural limits inherent in the basic conception of Christ on the cross. Specifically, perhaps the picture's configuration underwent the following phases: (1) here is the upright of the cross, (2) it would look richer if it were also carved, (3) there is an impulse to shape its outline to conform to the outline of the figure, like a silhouette, (4) if the beam is rounded in front it must be rounded in back as well, and (5) now it looks like a man seen from the side.

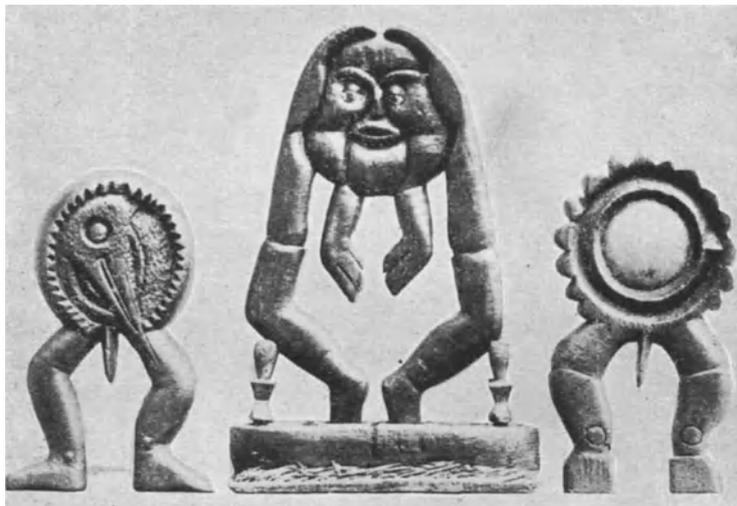
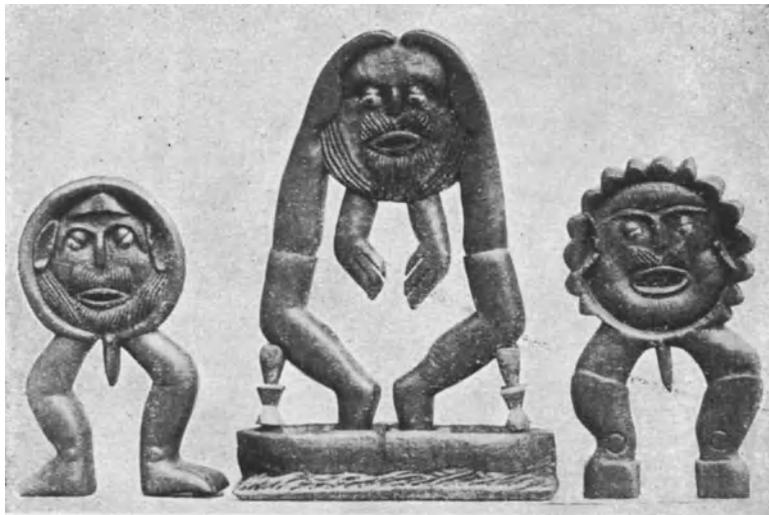
Before the significance of the content of “The Crucified One” is explored with the aid of Brendel’s statements, we shall briefly examine two related works. The “Kneeling Christ,” a flat relief (Figure 87), is distinguished by its simplicity and natural flexibility, despite the strictness of its symmetry. The human figure also has better proportions and even has a head that is too small, unlike any other done by Brendel. It has breasts and no genitals. In its right hand it holds perhaps a piece of bread, and in the left is a bird whose plumage is treated just like those in the two examples mentioned above but whose head appears only as a bowl-like depression. An aluminum ring adorns the left arm and extends far beyond the plane of the picture. The inscription is “Lio Lomati XX + III” and has a magic meaning which, however, is not clear from Brendel’s explanations.

The Christ motif appears for the third time in three somewhat later figures (Figure 88), which we shall investigate first for their formal contents. All three are carved from flat boards, but all are firmly rounded off. The two smaller ones were made before the middle one. At first they were called “The Woman with the Elephant Feet” and “The Woman with the Stork,” the latter title appearing on the back in relief. Later Brendel also called one figure “Jesus” and the other “Jesin” (Jesess, a female Jesus), but he constantly applies both names to the larger central figure which on its back has a beardless face and which has two bent hands between its long legs. These are apparently for the sake of decoration. The smaller figures are equipped with raglike or perhaps scrotumlike forms. The large figure is Jesus, who has entered a ship and sailed away, to the astonishment of the people. The figure does in fact stand loosely in a base resembling a ship. Head-and-feet figures like these are among the bricklayer’s strangest works. We shall speak later about the psychological bases of the motif and its relations to other facets of pictorial configuration. Here we shall discuss the three figures as hermaphrodites and as representations of Christ.

The strange fascination with hermaphrodites, which appears in Brendel’s representation of Christ but also alone in quite a number of his later works, demands closer investigation. Brendel’s statements about it are as follows: about the large piece he says, “One sees only the head because the body has been nailed to the cross – the Jesin is in the back – Jesus is of the same sex as we are – but he lets the girl into the con-



Case 17 **Fig. 87.** 13.5 × 13.5 cm.  
Kneeling Christ (Wood relief).



Case 17 **Fig. 88.** 19 and 26 cm.  
Three Head-and-Foot Figurines; Front and rear views (Wood).

vent – there is nothing supernatural about it.” About the two other head-and-feet figures of Figure 88, which he repeatedly described as women, he says, “Also as much as a Jesus – because every man is a Jesus and proclaims himself as one. Jesus was a dachshund; – the bag, those are the sacraments. He carries everything in the bag, like St. Nicholas.” In what sense are they women? “The Jesin wants to have the upper hand; she has religion on her brain. She believes but she does not believe.” About the flat relief, Figure 87: “Jesus has something in his hand and promises something to his father – of course he has breasts, because the woman wants to have the upper hand.” Finally, about the “Crucified One”: “That is a crucified Savior – the arms are for blunting – and he has teats because the woman wants to have the upper hand. A Jesin belongs to every Jesus, after all – that character Barnabas is also after him and the choppers [?] – that is why that Zabbedaeus must get here – the zone or notice [which means phallus!]. The breasts are for milk, and that [the phallus] is sin. One of them committed sin with Sabbedaus behind the altar.”

Brendel's outlook is shown by his statements, many of which he has repeated frequently, such as, "man must make a sacrifice," "the clergyman Jesus Christ comes at night and cuts holes into the hands with a knife," "Lazarett [hospital] means Nazareth, that is to say Jesus and prayer; and I am Lazarus," and "when I come to the cross there will be no more war;" by his fantasies about hermaphrodites which he either claims to derive from an experience with an abnormal girl or from cases he had seen while with his surgeon v. B.; and by his attitude toward marriage, from which his Christ hermaphrodites grew.

Brendel's experiences with marriage difficulties, or better stated generally, the relations of man and woman, most likely contributed to form his views while he was still healthy. His many expressions about these problems of life are based on emotion rather than recognition. He feels an inescapable sexual constraint transcending his whole imagination and outlook. To the extent that he views his own participation in it completely subjectively he shamelessly lets us see limitless desires which, given the force of his whole personality, are almost genuinely grandiose but often also adopt the character of faunlike lust and indulge in raw, if relatively witty, jokes.

When, on the other hand, he turns his attention to sexual objects, they are of two kinds: either the passive sexual objects which occupy his fantasy most (specifically young girls, children, and animals — though nothing can be discovered about any real experiences with them), or, on the other hand, the independent woman, appearing with a will of her own. Opposite her he feels unfree because she uses the sexual nature of a man in order to gain power over him ("the woman wants to have the upper hand," he says often). He judges the sexual drive only positively and recognizes it without limitations as a fate imposed on man, but also as a source of pleasure. It is therefore neither devalued as sin nor valued in its embryonic form, chastity, but its boundless, brutal force appears in those of his experiences which are connected with hallucinations and physical sensations, especially in the genitals. He reinterprets the behavior of his attendants during his periods of excitement as homosexual acts and cruel tortures (such as a ripping out of his penis with a hook, etc.), and feels himself delivered up as victim, brutalized in a sphere of life which he knows to be the domain of power and arbitrariness — with the exception of his dependency on his wife based on the sexual tie.

A third, similar complex of experience in which Brendel feels himself violated and victimized is added to the two mentioned, but it lacks any sexual connotations. It arises from his long illness and the amputation of his leg, which again delivered him up as a victim to superior powers, at first physically and then more generally during the subsequent pension disputes. We cannot find out whether the fantasies about hermaphrodites really go back to practical experiences, as Brendel maintains. We therefore have to limit ourselves to showing the discoverable psychic determinants of this incredibly effective and tenacious conceptual complex. The report of 1906 mentions that Brendel was apparently long uninformed in sexual matters, which makes it probable that at that time he would often speak of them, as subsequent reports in fact expressly verify. He began to tell spontaneously of a whole lot of childish sexual experiences of which we cannot determine whether or not, or to what degree, they were invented. He said, for example, that he had studied the differences between boys and girls in bed with his sister. Furthermore, discussions or cynical jokes about masturbation of both sexes as well as the sex life of the clergy, of nuns, and of nurses, recur frequently. Brendel's amalgam of sexual fantasies does not have the usual contemplatively lustful character, the inclination to moralize, or the secretiveness usually accompanied by a feeling of sinfulness, but rather

a pagan worldliness and rough bluntness. The sexual drive of which he speaks is imposed on every living thing as a burden, an inescapable urge which is directed inconsiderately at all living things. It also reigns in religion — all of humanity is subject to it. That is why not only the clergy and nuns are subject to it but also Christ.

We now introduce a working hypothesis whose validity can be easily established since all the links in the conceptual chain have been demonstrated elsewhere. It seems to us that Brendel's hermaphroditic concept is grounded roughly as follows: every living thing is dominated by the desire for the opposite sex as an eternal, basic urge transcending everything else, but if two persons are united the woman wants the advantage; if one is alone his disquiet only increases; therefore, how would it be if dual creatures combined femininity and masculinity and were freed from the urge and the striving for power by the opposite part? We can conceive of higher beings only in such combinations. An isolated recollection may gain an almost sensuous immediacy in concert with such affectively emphasized playful conceptualizations. The dominating role of Brendel's sexual ideas can certainly not be made comprehensible without such an attempt at uncovering its affective foundation. Nor can we any longer permit ourselves to consider any interpretation impossible unless we are to be dogmatic.

We must still discuss Brendel's statements about Christ as the crucified one, and investigate their deeper meaning. We preface this discussion with the fact that Christ is considered not so much God-man or the founder of a religion in the churchly sense, but rather the representative of a higher kind of humanity which, however, shares in all the qualities and suffering of man, but in a higher degree. On the other hand, Brendel identifies himself with princes and kings as well as with Christ, which is quite usual for schizophrenics. But Brendel, who has his own transformed Christ, affords us a much more graphic view of the psychological integration of this identification into directly parallel processes and qualities. Like Christ Brendel finds himself sacrificed and exposed to worldly power without protection, even though he knows himself to be in the possession of supernatural powers, can execute men by the rays of the sun, and can pardon them when they repent. On the other hand, he projects his own emotional experiences and drives into his picture of Christ which is so closely related to him, especially the sexual constraint which he now formulates as a demand: "To every Jesus there belongs a Jesin," and "he is just like us." The Christ-hermaphrodite would therefore appear to be the result of Brendel's still unfulfilled demand for the supplementary wife and his utopian wish fantasy. Would not all be well if man and woman were united in one body, the battle for advantage ended, and the urgency of the sexual search superseded? If the concept of sin plays any role at all in Brendel's imagination it would find a symbol of relief in the sexual duality of the Son of God who has found a sovereign remedy for the common predicament.

Such interpretations, which are certainly not based on logical syllogisms but rather on free play with the affectively most emphasized concepts, can hardly be dismissed as artificial, intellectual constructions but can claim a high degree of validity because they conform closely to the carver's objective pictorial and verbal statements. Our purely psychological explanation of the hermaphroditic fantasy must, however, still be supplemented by an investigation into the history of the human spirit<sup>28</sup> which alone could give it meaning (see p. 250f.).

<sup>28</sup> In the meantime we have collected a great amount of comparative material for the subject and have found the greatest understanding in Leo Frobenius, who in his Africa archives made whole series of striking pictures available to us, and in Prof. Warburg (Hamburg).

Let us look at some more of Brendel's carvings with bisexuality as their main motif. Brendel describes Figure 89 (wood stained bright green, with black and red, and yellow and blue details) as follows: "Man and woman; she has the yardstick in her hand and puts it to her mouth, has the feet of a bear, and wears the red cross in front of her head; he has the carpenter's plane, wears cannulae in his larynx and also has the feet of a bear." This dual figurine has two fronts which are treated rather flatly in the manner of reliefs. The sides have little meaning; the figurine has no profile to speak of. From the side we merely see straight, barely grooved lines as representatives of the frontal surfaces. Wherever a given form could by its curve lead to a consistent, realistic correlation of a lateral and a frontal surface, the possibility is decisively barred. For example, the elbow is quite simply pushed forward to the original edge of the cylinder and presented as a stylized right angle. The emphasis on the genitals, formally rather restrained, is increased by flaming red paint. It should be mentioned that within the widely opened vulva two conical bodies apparently represent the orifices of the bladder and uterus, and that in the exact center of the common perineum a hind orifice has been carefully hollowed out and painted red. Brendel repeatedly shows a tendency to give animal feet to human figures.

The dual figurine, "Hussar and Woman," Figure 90 (stained wine red, with flaming red, blue, and black detail), represents a new, playful type of hermaphroditic picture,



Case 17 **Fig. 89.** 70 cm.  
Dual Figurine, Man-Woman  
(Wood).



Case 17 **Fig. 90.** 30 cm.  
Dual Figurine with Four Faces  
(Wood)



Case 17 **Fig. 91.** 24 cm.  
Dual Figurine (Wood).



Case 17 **Fig. 92.** 38 cm.  
Hermaphrodite (Wood).

but the eminently plastic (in the artistic sense) independence of all four bordering surfaces has been carried even further. Not only is the motif of a horse's head – closely related, like the iron cross, to a hussar – incised into one of the sides, but the two pairs of legs are so positioned in the side views that the masculine and feminine pairs can be visually combined to form the legs of a new figure. As a logical extension of this idea each surface has its own face, so that there are four faces on the figure. A short brush crowns the "hussar's" peculiar hat at one corner of the masculine side. Strangely, both sexes carry carpenter's planes across their chests, whereas in the figure discussed previously a plane seemed to mark the man, perhaps because of the popular sexual idiom, "planing." Brendel himself expressed the sexual symbolism of the astonishing larynx cannulae in another connection when he used "cannulae" as synonymous with "penis." If in our previous figure the woman was clearly characterized by pointed pendulous breasts, this figure shows only small hints of breasts on both sides, of which one on each side is completely formed, the larger and more distinct one of these being on the masculine side. The genitals on both sides are more crudely formed than in the green figure. The transition is new in that a sort of scrotum or hanging perineum is gaping grotesquely, and carries an anus more toward the masculine side.

Two other, later double figurines are not as distinctly omnisided and approach the flatness of the head-and-feet figures. Brendel describes the one shown in Figure 91 (wood, stained grayish brown, with blue and red detail) as follows: "Man and wife sit on a stork's leg which lies on a rock into which a house is hewn. The lung sticks out of the chest, in the hand he holds the clock with flower and watch hand." The figure's convincing lines and discreet coloring make it especially appealing despite all of its abstruse detail. The stairs appear again as a motif, this time as a double staircase with an excavated room in its center, and we also see again the protruding lung (see p. 112). The chest is completely flat on both sides, and the genitals are more discreetly shown on the masculine side by a small hole intended perhaps for the attachment of a phallus. The figure raises

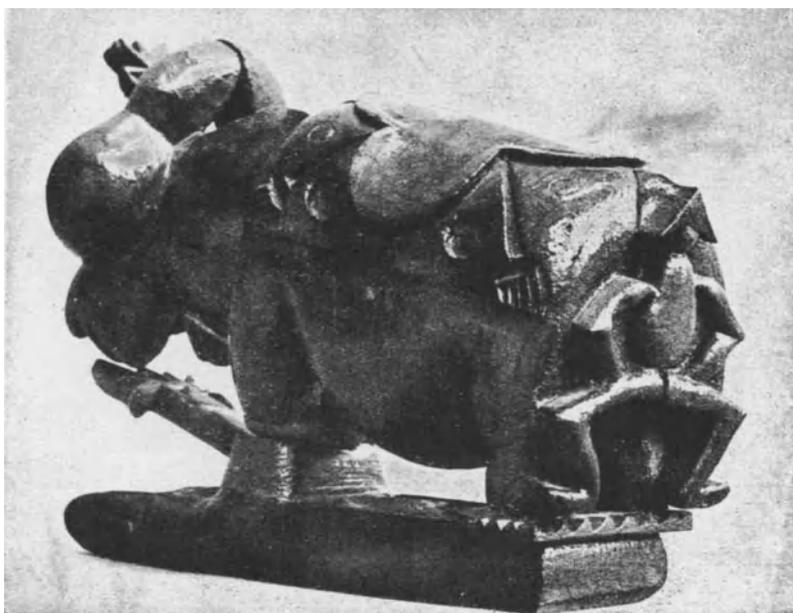
a keg, which, bearing colored tin lilies of the valley under a bulging watch crystal on one side and on the other two watch hands, is reminiscent of fancy antique clocks. How logically both sides are individually developed to conform to the total appearance, rather than to any real organism, is shown by the shape of the raised hand which externally has only four fingers, but has a thumb on each side inside.

The last double figurine, Figure 92 (wood, orange color, painted with oil paint), shows a completely grotesque transformation of a figure which, formally at least, is rather proportionate. Brendel says this about it: "Woman and man, or Adam and Eve, are supposed to have understood each other spiritually. In one hand a clock which is equivalent to the brain. As thoughts run off so does the clock. Dextery-stery means brain." Nobody will deny that this figure, which as a sculpture is surely not comparable to the others, is not simply absurd but makes a much more terrifying impression than they. The deformations of its repulsive body, which is somehow convincing in spite of its distorted brutality, are combined with a few individual features like the parallelism of the two half-open eyes, one in the head and the other the "brain clock," and with the really insanely pointed contradiction between the round moon face on the side of the clock and the distorted, caricatured profile on the reverse side. The rather graphic and well rounded, full modeling of the lower part has a particularly repulsive effect; the fantastic free treatment of the upper part, which is also worked so as to appear in relief, is in painful contradiction to it. Compared to this deeply disquieting discrepancy, the loutish, plump depiction of the genitals (with the vulva in the back) hardly strikes us as particularly repulsive.

Some of Brendel's animal figurines lead us into quite a different imaginative realm with much freer, formal fantasies. For one, we have the "Hippopotomus with Two Heads on the Bootjack," Figure 93 (wood painted reddish brown and grayish brown with oil paints), a fully rounded sculpture which we can view from all sides, although some major features are brought to our attention rather emphatically. The tendency to concentrate on them is aided especially by the strict symmetrical construction of the fabulous animal. We should indeed speak of an axial composition: the barrel-shaped figure seems centered on an axis running from the front to the back, an arrangement not voluntarily adopted by the sculptor, however, but imposed on him by the shape of his original block of wood. He accepted the limitation and thereby laid the groundwork for the unusually strict and yet not unfree compactness which distinguishes the hippopotomus except for its base.

The purely psychological aspect of the configurative process will be discussed elsewhere. At present we are concerned with the formal components of the total impression. The details are completely proportionate to the monumental character imposed on the figure by the original shape of the wood block. The most important formal features of the side view are the definite tripartite division of the heavy animal figure into a weighty, drum-shaped rump with plump leg stumps not extending beyond the curvature of the belly, the thickset, concentrically narrowed and sharply separated neck with a curve in the nape suggesting the pain of holding up the double head, and that head, which is also sharply separated and which itself extends in profile to the limits of the original block. The rough base of the bootjack subordinates itself as a well proportioned lower mass, and its slight angle lifts the somewhat bowed heads for an even more forceful effect. "With the front legs it stands on the feed trough and eats the turnip," its author explains. The turnip fills the space between the mouths and bootjack quite well.

It is the front, however, which shows us the whole treasure of fantastic detail, again executed with the strictest restraint because it is integrated into the still noticeable original circumference. Not to show our enthusiasm, in keeping with our intention, calls for a



Case 17 **Fig. 93.** 32 × 23 cm.  
“Hippopotamus with Two Heads on the Bootjack” (Wood, painted).

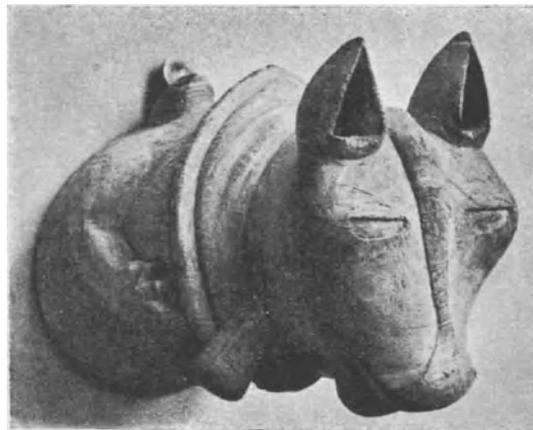
strong act of self-discipline in a man used to living freely among art objects. The hippo's mouths, turning slightly toward one another, the separation of the halves of its noses into distinct body parts, the moody stare of its unevenly placed eyes, the strict symmetric turning of its ears into a gabled crown, in front of which a kind of decorative crest appears – every feature stimulates us to describe it more completely.

Not to be forgotten is the hippo's hind end which is decorated with a saddle blanket reminiscent of a relief: on it a very flat and stylized jumping jack is spread-eagled. Brendel explains: "At the hind end a man who pays attention because he [it?] has no hole." The logic of this genuinely schizophrenic sentence can hardly be understood rationally. Obviously it contains an anal fantasy. There is also a house with a gate entrance in the bootjack, below the belly, which Brendel emphasizes specifically. Unfortunately we do not know how this rich and compact work came to be. We know as little about any possible external inspiration as about the ideas which led Brendel to execute the details as he did. We have to be content to speculate that the sculpture probably originated in the free play of Brendel's imagination, without plan, meaning, or emotional content capable of being verbally expressed, but rather from a blind creative urge whose path was of course prepared by earlier works.

"The Cat," (*Dachhase*, literally roof rabbit), Figure 94, which seems to revive the old tradition of the gargoyle of Romanesque and Gothic architecture, is similarly precise. The body, which together with the flapper feet is compressed into the smallest possible space, is pure play, but the head, far removed from any natural model, extends in its restrained compactness into the realm of the monumental.

The group in Figure 95 (wood, painted yellow and green with oil paints), which originated simultaneously with the hippopotamus, underwent a very similar configurative process, yet the result is formally entirely different. It is precisely the discussion of these differences which will throw light on the components of the configurative process. Brendel describes this complicated sculpture as follows: "A ruin, next to it a sofa with poodle dogs, in front a man who pulls the eggs out of a bird; above, on top of the ruin, an ox, positioned like an angel, with its own coat which is at the same time a roof for it."

For the first time Brendel has neglected the cohesion of the whole which distinguished his other works. The different motifs surround the trunk of the "ruin" without regard for the observer, who cannot discern any clear front. Whereas earlier sculptures had an inherent formal regularity which could be experienced directly if not rationally and



Case 17      **Fig. 94.** "Cat" (Wood). 19 × 15 cm.



Case 17

**Fig. 95.** "Ruin" etc. (Wood, painted).

31 cm.

was always stronger than the realism of the motif, this figure has an uncertain effect. Even though formal abstraction, not a pedantic realism, dominates the details, the capricious and accidental order is very anti-artistic in its formal carelessness. What may have caused this unusual fault? Two possibilities present themselves as origins of the work. Either the description just quoted refers to an experience antedating the carving which, like a dream, transpired without logical cohesion, as a free, loose chain of associations, perhaps in connection with some delusion or other. On the other hand, the formal inspiration may have been given by the shape of the original block, aimlessly, so that new impulses appeared between one cut and the next which were directed toward unclear changes of the shape and which continually exploited and interpreted new possibilities. We must accept the latter explanation in many other cases (*e.g.* that of August Klotz, p. 131 ff.), but in the case of the "Ruin" serious objections rule against its acceptance.

Playfulness is doubtless present whenever artists add freely to what is already present, as in drawing, painting, or modeling with soft material. These artists can alter the direction of their work at any time. A face suggests itself in the sketch of a landscape: a few strokes and the sheet presents *only* a face. But in wood carving, in which material is removed, each step denies a whole chain of prior possibilities and the scope for action becomes ever smaller. Therefore an always active eidetic image has to determine each new cut because it cannot be corrected.

To illustrate, using our concrete example: the ox with its own blanket, which it also uses as a roof, could not subsequently have emerged from a common ox, as we might

conceive it happening in drawing. Instead a prior formal conception exists, “ox with attachment developing from the body like a cocoon and falling off the back to one side.” We can assume a secondary associative origin for the green tiles of the roof – similarly with the sofa and the poodles playing on it: we are unable to doubt the primacy of the eidetic image any more than in the case of the man pulling out the eggs. Playful shaping as the result of spontaneous ideas probably accounts for the horse’s mane, its hoofs, and the tail made of horsehair. We see here the frequently mentioned tendency toward “contamination” or consolidation of somehow related images. That the ox is emphatically called a steer is also important, even if that fact is more solidly rooted in the previously described erotic fantasies than the rest of the inspirations. The real problem here, in contrast to the other works, is therefore not the formal quality but the puzzle of the basic psychic process which determined the motifs. How does a tangible, plastic sculpture result from a loose chain of associations resembling a dream?

This question can be discussed only in psychopathological terms. Judged by even the most broad-minded normal psychological standards, Brendel’s combination of the three motifs must be considered absurd in form and content. On the other hand, we are familiar with the symptom of “incoherence” in the spoken expressions of mental patients, especially schizophrenics. We have noticed it already in Brendel’s writings, but have simultaneously illustrated how parts of incoherent writings can be explained when there is exact knowledge of the underlying imaginative material. The ideas incorporated directly in the work being discussed here can be easily enumerated: a ruin, a sofa with two poodles, a man with uneven eyes who pulls an egg from a bird, and a steer-ox with a coat. There can be no doubt that the images are logically incompatible. A psychological relationship between them, perhaps in a hallucinatory experience, could not be established. No formal unity is achieved by any intuitive assemblage of the parts into a convincing total impression. The piece can therefore be briefly defined as a three-dimensional body, shaped by a man, with several recognizable formal details, which, however, cannot be arranged into a comprehensible unity either objectively and logically, or psychologically, or formally.

As for the details, the poodles on the sofa or the man with the bird may strike us as strange as ideas or in their depiction, but it takes the crowning ox replacing an angel to make us feel the extent to which the normal range of fantasy has been exceeded. Indeed, psychopathologic terminology alone offers the concepts under which the qualities of this fabulous animal may be subsumed. As we mentioned, the combination of ox, steer, and horse corresponds exactly to the definition of contamination. Brendel himself once called the desire of women for entertainment “auffällig,” combining *einfallig* (impulsive) and *auffällig* (showy or striking), both of which easily fit the meaning of his sentence. Whether the horsehair, lying readily at hand, provided the impetus for the amalgamation, or whether perhaps the hoofs, shaped abstractly like rubber stamps without any definite model, provided the association “horse,” or whether the dual creature was planned from the beginning, is a moot question.

The process which created the coat, also used by the ox as a roof, is more difficult to understand. As we have already made clear such a formal detail can result only from a model. Three possibilities seem to exist: (1) the fabulous creature appeared to Brendel in a hallucination, at least with its main feature, the coat; (2) the coat appeared in his imagination during playful, formal fantasy, in which analogies like cocoon, blankets, and roofs may have played a role; or (3) it resulted from free association (intuition). All three origins are equally probable.

We have now surveyed all of the possible relationships quite thoroughly and face the basic question to which we hoped to find an answer in this especially strange piece: in which qualities do we find the specifically “mentally ill” or “schizophrenic” element?

Let us enumerate the qualities again, from the details to the total picture. Its every motif is unusual. Poodles do not usually play on sofas; the point of this particular combination is not quite clear, but it is not impossible. Casually put the question might be, “Why not?” This careless, playful question seems to us to come quite close to characterizing the inner attitude of the sculptor when he invented the group. The second motif, a man pulling eggs from a bird, may also spring partly from a why-not attitude, but that it is in fact determined by erotic images is proved less by the work itself than by our knowledge about its author. Purely formal auxiliary motives obviously also contribute to it, however. It is quite conceivable that the line of the back of the bird developed without the presence of the guiding idea, simply from the ornamental decoration of the upper stump of the ruin which provided an associative stimulus, but there is little evidence of such a process. A few details of both groups point toward the playful why-not, especially the horsehair tail of one of the poodles and the hand of the man whose fourth finger extends far beyond the others. A technical and a formal auxiliary motif are added here which allow the playful why-not attitude even less scope than usual: the outline of the hand is indicated by three or four great cuts through which its tip comes to lie at the edge of the lower horizontal groove. The relationship of this complete form to the horizontal groove and the parallelism of the roughly ridged, pointed beard were more compelling than the model of a real hand.

The uneven eyes of the man, which are treated as independent entities, must be approached differently. One of them lies in a wide circular hole; the other is attached like a frog’s eye or hemisphere, and its pupil consists of yellow glass. It will not do to invoke playful inventiveness as an explanation, because a tendency is evident here which has deeper roots, in a realm where magic ideas are determinants. The immediate impression made by the eyes points to magic. Whereas the other details arouse an unemotional interest by their eccentricities, the completely independent eyes exert a gruesome force which only increases the more the observation is prolonged and against which no rationalization is effective.

We already found an amalgamation of an ox, a steer, and a horse in the crowning animal figure and established parallels between it and the neologisms frequently invented by schizophrenics. The playful attitude is unmistakable here as well, and a coherent recreation of the process of configuration is impossible because there is no order imposed by any desire to picture anything definite. No matter how we wish to imagine the basic formative experience, whether as free association, hallucination, or play combining individual features, the sculpture remains so unusual, bizarre, and strange that we seldom see the like, even in dreams. A comparable dream reported by a normal person nevertheless shows a closely related quality, namely the judgment that the strangeness is, after all, quite natural — “Why not”?

The dream went:

I am riding in uniform, with a comrade on a golden chestnut on my left and a steep grassy slope on the right. My horse hangs back slightly, perhaps because the horse on the left pushes it over a bit. I urge my horse on with legs and spurs, but notice how the animal falls back more and more — then I slide backwards into emptiness, pull myself up several times with the reins, which I hold high as in jumping, but have to admit that all my efforts

are in vain. Then I notice to my horror that my horse is only half a horse – the back half is missing! As I am trying to make sense of this I suddenly realize: oh, of course, this is the last horse in line!

We must admit that this brief amalgamation, resembling a short circuit between two sentences which provides emotional relief in the instant of recognition, coincides in all its essentials with the schizophrenic condensations already mentioned.

A similarly loose association of inventions of the kind we find in the “Ruin” seems also to be present in “The Church,” Figure 96. But when we analyze its individual motifs we find that they have a much clearer inner cohesion, and that only their arbitrary free treatment by the carver estranges us slightly because it has loosened the sculpture’s hold on reality. As always, personal experiences are basically responsible. The “church” with its pagodalike towers and the overly large pigeon is simultaneously intended as an altar. In front of the altar, on the opened cover of the tomb in which Christ lies, stands the pastor who is deformed into a fabulous animal. At the side we again find stairs, and, in back, a sort of prison cell which stands for the tomb of Christ as well as Brendel’s prison and asylum cells.

The small half-round wooden figurine in Figure 97 (stained dark brown), which looks like a small, bulbous man and is also reminiscent of many ancestor figures from New Guinea, presents very few problems. Many people, when told that the figure was intended



Case 17 **Fig. 96.** 30 cm.  
“Church” (Wood, painted).



Case 17 **Fig. 97.** 15.5 cm.  
“Hindenburg” (Wood).



Case 17 **Fig. 98.** 30 cm.  
 "William I. and II."  
 (Wood).



Case 17 **Fig. 99.** 43 cm.  
 "Militarism" (Wood).

as a portrait of a famous contemporary, recognized Paul von Hindenburg without any trouble. In fact, it is not difficult to make the connection, with the aid of the carver's statements, between the individual traits of the figure and its model: the armor, executed technically like the bird in Figure 83, marks the carving as that of a warrior, and the fantastic crown symbolizes the high esteem in which the nation holds him. Once Brendel even said, "He wears it just in case William II abdicates." Since the figure was carved during the war one can judge the bricklayer's powers of prophecy according to one's personal inclinations. Hindenburg has large ears because he must hear everything, and his nose protrudes because he must smell everything. The typical officer's mustache speaks for itself, and the thick cheeks correspond particularly with the popular conception of the comfortable family man. The clerical frill collar and folded hands indicate that he has to pray with the soldiers.

We can see that there is always a very meaningful, provable connection between Brendel's objectively presented, if somewhat absurd, details, and his model, regardless of whether his explanations actually describe the sequence of the steps he took during production or whether a part can be accounted for only as a subsequent invention. We certainly experience here very directly how a contemporary is turned into a myth. Such mythification, very foreign indeed to the last century, which was unable to free Napoleon, let alone Bismarck, from the dissolving light of rational inquiry, takes place so convincingly in the carver despite his renunciation of the world that many people would consider this ancestral figure of our most popular leader a more valid picture than the usual tavern photograph.

Two more recent large pieces are closely related to it: "Militarism," Figure 99 (wood, stained dark brown), and "William I and II" or "Lehmann from Berlin," Figure 98 (stained brown). The latter is distinguished equally by the plastically clear and sure modeling and the impact of Brendel's grotesque combination, which is not without wit, of both

emperors in one head wearing the whiskers of the first and the mustache and mouth of the second. We are less able to understand by any kind of association the peculiar Red Cross cap. The work is theoretically important in two ways. It proves for once that very definite contents may become operative before or during the act of configuration which preclude subsequent accidental interpretations, and it demonstrates effectively the already mentioned tendency to fuse several persons. Whereas the other examples involved hermaphrodites, however, which sometimes consisted of two bodies but were occasionally found in one, as in the case of the bearded "Woman with the Elephant Feet," Figure 98 combines a grandfather and his grandson. In looking for comparable features we would have to consider first the great wars conducted by both and then, as contrasting elements, the modest peacefulness of the one, and the verbose arrogance, which dominates the figure's expression, of the other.

"Militarism" is not grasped so easily. Very different inventions are combined in it. The large head, designed according to Brendel's custom with two faces, wears a spiked helmet. This plastically most difficult motif is solved almost perfectly, as several sculptors emphasized, by the shortening of the spike and the slight curve of its point. The rifles on both sides of the head, which together with the helmet strap serve to separate the head's two halves, are purely allegorical additions, but the groups below are harder to understand. Why would militarism stick out its tongue down as far as the back of a horse? The tongue's curve has a good formal effect because, from the side, it suggests the contours of a base. Brendel's explanations are very indefinite. He describes only the small figures reasonably: one horse feeds from a trough. A man who wants to knock heads with the other horse hangs from the helmet strap by one hand, which is as large as his whole body. These two functions of the horse seem to predominate in Brendel's concept of militarism.

Our discussion of the bricklayer's plastic works is concluded with the large bust of the devil, Figure 100 (stained dark). Its thin, somewhat goatish head speaks for itself.



Case 17 **Fig. 100.** 60 cm.  
Devil (Wood).



Case 17

**Fig. 101.** Eight Drawings (Pencil).

Each 8 × 10 cm.

The shape of the horns was determined by a nice schizophrenic trait: a horse's hoof replaces one horn, simply because the carver did not know how else to attach a hoof to the bust and yet found it quite indispensable. This jocular detail diminishes slightly the expression of stark horror which many observers felt very strongly.

Brendel drew almost nothing. The majority of his surviving drawings are reproduced in Figure 101. The upper ones show very well how he deals with the model shown in the center of the row; the copies to its right and left are based on tracings. At first the theme of the model, "man and woman," seems to have roused him to contradiction, so that he made both persons bearded in one copy and beardless in the other, while giving each eyeglasses. Among the many reinterpretations obvious within the traced contours we emphasize only the light rounded area of the belly of the seated bearded figure and the confusion of the three small naked legs in the corresponding beardless one. We have seen the tendency to produce conglomerates of limbs independent of any organic realities before. It is carried to extremes in the mad figure with three heads and with one arm growing from the hip and another from the thigh. The gorillalike "sun cross" and the similar "moon staff cross" drawings fit into the works with the Christ motif, whereas there is nothing comparable to the centaur called "observatory staff." Brendel's captions seem to indicate that he was inspired by reading. The dark figure with the inscription "O du" (Oh you) between the bent legs is most reminiscent of Brendel's style as shown in the sculptures. The stylized development of the genitals into a rhombic shield, which looks as if it could be unfolded, is especially noteworthy. The small horses were traced.

Brendel could not be moved to explain. He could not quite remember having made the drawings. As a whole they are quite comparable with the sculptures. They always aim at clear physical forms as well as at strong outlines. Brendel's tendency, seen here, to spread bodies across the whole available area was also evident in the reliefs. His plump heavy lines do not hesitate at any detail and score many a point precisely because they betray his convictions.

Finally we must report a statement Brendel made about his work which is in complete agreement with the most famous words delivered by the world's greatest sculptors. We might even say that it is the best statement ever about the forming of a block: "When I have a piece of wood in front of me, a hypnosis is in it — if I follow it something comes of it, otherwise there is going to be a fight." One can hardly describe intuition and the struggle for configuration any more vividly.

## 2. August Klotz

August Klotz, born in 1864, is the son of a merchant in a prosperous Swabian town of medium size. Among Klotz's brothers and cousins are a lawyer, a minister, and a wholesaler in Marseille and Amsterdam. His father, who died at 44 from a stroke, was "loud, domineering, and irascible," but the rest of the family was of a sanguine temperament. Klotz's mother, who comes from another part of the country, is still alive and healthy. Nothing is known of any nervous or emotional illness on either side of the family. His brothers and sisters are healthy. Klotz attended the *Gymnasium* of his home town and, after his training as a merchant for two and a half years and his military service from 1886 to 1891, went abroad, especially to Belgium and England, where he was a representative for export firms. From 1891 to 1903 he worked for his father's commission agency, particularly as a wine and champagne representative. Physically Klotz was always healthy except for a bout with "Antwerp Fever" (gonorrhoea).

Despite his good mind Klotz had a hard time of it in his youth, in his own opinion, because he was very reserved and even shy. Nothing more precise is known. He still harbors bitter feelings toward a history teacher who failed to promote him. He played the piano and the violin, and claimed that his music teacher had advised him to become a forester and then to play his violin in the woods. Apparently he lived quite stylishly, if modestly. At least he often said that he had been interested only in "wine, women, and song" and "had learned the basic gynecological facts from the *jeunesse dorée*." He is always very urbane and courteous. His writing style conforms to that of business correspondence but is sprinkled with numerous expressive and original phrases, and is in keeping with his behavior. His sexual vocabulary is inexhaustible and picturesque, however, and we may assume that he learned it in his healthy days, when his travels as a wine salesman would have offered him opportunity enough. We have not been able to learn how much of an alcoholic he was in the full sense. All in all he appears to have been an able businessman before his illness, a traveling representative of considerable urbanity and a virile man of sanguine temperament, but he also showed a touch of melancholia, especially in his relationship with the Freemasons and in an affair occurring just before his illness. He has undeniably Swabian traits. His illness apparently began earlier than 1903. People noticed that he became ever more reticent. After a heavy case of influenza he fell into depressions, feared sin, believed that he had caused his family misfortune and shame, drank much instead of eating, and was afraid that he was about to die. Hallucinations appeared and caused him to become greatly excited. One day he suddenly inflicted a cut in his abdomen.

In the asylum Klotz was still depressed at first. He wept much, spoke of sad secrets, brooded for long periods, or stared at the ceiling with a fearful expression and with folded hands; his very wide pupils were noticeable. In a few days he changed and showed signs of megalomania: he now claimed to be Christ, described the sufferings of the crucifix-

ion and pointed to the wound from the lance – actually from his suicide attempt – and preached and quoted Bible verses. Of his eyes he said that one was the eye of love and the other that of truth. Or he would suddenly behave foolishly, play simpleminded jokes, or read aloud from the newspaper while emphatically naming each punctuation mark. His behavior fluctuated rapidly, often hourly, between the two extremes. Increasingly added to it was a surly irritability from which at first he would explode into wild abusiveness and bluster, and later into sudden violence. Gradually delusions appeared ever more clearly as the occasions of his peculiar behavior. He continually heard obscenities, accusations, and threats. He saw devils' faces grinning at him in wallpaper patterns. Everything he observed referred to him. The guards and his fellow patients gestured meaningfully, talked about him, conspired to kill him, and tempted him to lewdness, and the pictures in the asylum's main hall contained suggestive allusions. His body was totally changed, his heart was removed and the wrong blood was poured into it. He had other hypochondriac delusions of the same sort.

Klotz had been drawing earlier than most of the patients on whom we report in this book. The faces in the wallpaper seem not to have released their hold on him any more. As early as the beginning of his second year a number of figures were one day found to be rubbed into the wallpaper with fat. Their meanings were hard to fathom and Klotz called them "Freemason signs." Soon thereafter it was reported that he complained of seeing skulls everywhere. At the same time he began to make almost incomprehensible computations, schematic notations, and lists, in addition to writing endless letters to the authorities. His condition became more stable. The time of rapid emotional fluctuations was past, the close relationship to his former environment and to the whole outside world was dissolved, and he adjusted completely to his delusions, achieving the typical schizophrenic world view and an explicit autism. It concluded the acute phase of his illness. Subsequently Klotz's basic traits no longer changed, but his eccentricities, which were already present in 1905, increased.

The new asylum which accepted him in 1905 found him dulled to a high degree, weak-minded, filled with fantastic but unsystematic delusions, very taken with himself, and secretive. Aside from periods of excitement, during which he continually erupts into abusiveness and threats against other patients, orderlies, and ministers, he occupies himself with reading, especially of the Bible, with spells of letter writing during which he may produce up to 18 lengthy epistles. He also draws. Even when he is quiet he is extremely irritable and occasionally knocks someone down without warning, even in church. He continues to be under the influence of his delusions and hallucinations. His manners are ceremonious and courteous. In conversation he appears to pay close attention and answers questions precisely at first, giving exact dates and many details, but then he suddenly digresses into fantasies which are probably caused by hallucinations, because he often murmurs to the side in the midst of an orderly conversation, as if he were answering voices. Although Klotz has developed no system of delusions like that of Neter (see p. 159), his imaginary life is nevertheless dominated by a few fixed and unchanging tendencies and opinions. Knowledge of them may perhaps increase our understanding of his personal method of drawing. As we have already mentioned he felt compelled to respond, as early as his acute phase, to the devils' masks and skulls appearing to him mostly in the wallpaper patterns, using fat which could not be wiped off to impress Masonic symbols on the paper. He continues to scribble "fan-shaped, stringy figures" to which he attributes secret meanings on the wall. Sight impressions continue to be the basic stimulus for his pictorial activities. As a secondary stimulus we must mention

his compulsion to systematize. As early as 1905 he sent his uncle a copy of his “color alphabet” for use in the uncle’s dyeing business. It goes as follows:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 A = England = red, red beets                    | 14 o = white as day,<br>Austria-Hungary                                   |
| 2 b = Bronze color metal                          | 15 p = purple colored   |
| 3 c = cocheneal = red                             | 16 q = quartz colored<br>(crystal glimmer, mica)                          |
| 4 d = sunlight yellow<br>= road dust colored      | 17 r = rose red La France   |
| 5 e = orange colored<br>= Germany                 | 18 s = small s = black raven,<br>large S = lemon colored yellow           |
| 6 f = fire flame red                              | 19 t = lilac = violets  |
| 7 g = gold  | 20 u = green = frog = Russia  |
| 8 h = heliotrope colored                          | 21 v = peacock blue   |
| 9 i = sky blue forget-me-not                      | 22 w = water color (sunlight falling on<br>the table through water glass) |
| 10 k = brown gold<br>(rooster’s neck Cochinchina) | 23 x = lacrimae Christi = red<br>= iron red (Blood-iron)                  |
| 11 l = Brown, May fly wing                        | 24 y = ; ; ; ; ; ; ; ; ; ;  |
| 12 m = Navy blue, Bethunie                        | 25 z = vermillion   |
| 13 n = natural color                              |   |

Attached to this list is another in which the relationships of chemicals, drugs and colors are shown, sometimes correctly, as prussic acid = arsenic = apple, peach, and almond pits; but often incorrectly, as potassium permanganate = blue = colored wood quebracho = blueberry, Bavarian cabbage, beet; strychnine = leek, chives, garlic, green; saffron yellow = carrot leaves; silver = lime, albumen, white blood corpuscles, moonlight, Aryan race; steel-iron ore mines = human blood from the battle fields of earlier times; and sulfur = egg yolk, nitrogen, epidemic corpses; etc.

A second color-number-letter system was noted down in 1914 in Klotz’s medical history and is still in use today. It goes like this:

- |            |        |             |
|------------|--------|-------------|
| 1 = tg/hys | 5 = s  | 9 = c       |
| 2 = p      | 6 = eb | 10 = kl     |
| 3 = im     | 7 = x  | 11 = sidnow |
| 4 = nv     | 8 = ar | 12 = gft    |

Klotz proceeds to figure out, according to this scheme, the sum of the digits of the chief words in a sentence, counting each letter as in the corresponding table (which he does very rapidly) and puts this sum down in parentheses behind the word, *e. g.* land (= 10 + 8 + 4 + 11 = 33), which he writes “land (33).” Next he begins to combine. Either he ingeniously searches out another word which gives the same sum and attaches it to the first on the basis of their cabalistic relationship, or he uses much more complicated processes which he apparently constantly invents. He may, for instance, take the sum of the digits of the previous sum (6 in the example) and substitute a color for it which itself calls up new chains of associations, as for instance here during a conversation: 4 = green = England, Spain, Portugal, and France = Western Europe; or, according to a notation in his medical history dated 1914, he declares, “11 is everything silver, si = silver, d = date skin silver, n = natural white silver, o = egg white silver, w = white silver. 12 = everything golden: g = gold, f = fire gold, z = vermillion.” At the time he liked to write long rows of numbers and interpret them as in this example: (80) (8) (19) (10) (1) (0). The number in the first set of parentheses is 8 + 0 = 8; but 8 + 0 may also be 19 if one accepts the 0 not as a zero but as an egg and therefore

substitutes for it 11 (= egg white silver).  $1 + 9 = 10$ . If we write it separately as (1) (0), it becomes a dissolved crystal or a separated marriage. He is 1 and she is 0. By continuous practice Klotz has naturally become astonishingly facile in his games. Whenever he notices an arithmetic mistake he becomes very angry and blames it on having had someone else help with the calculations. Klotz is strongly inclined to erect systems and orders and does not feel at all inhibited by conventional knowledge, but proceeds entirely playfully and arbitrarily, according to external relationships. Every individual substitution within his systems is logically unobjectionable, but his interpretations of the results arrived at by such substitutions are as capricious as his basic systems.

Klotz's drawings represent most clearly and in a pure form one particular method: playful scribbling which is developed line by line. A visual impression usually serves him as the first stimulus, e. g. a spot on the wall, a leaf or stone picked up in the garden or the shape of a cloud (see the theoretical section, p. 16 ff.). For awhile he carried in his pocket a flat, kidney-shaped stone, 6 centimeters in length, which he simply outlined with a pencil in numerous drawings. He also often calls upon small ruler which he always carries. What is important is that he has no complete conception when he begins a drawing, no matter how vague, but lets himself drift as if his eyes were closed, as in Figure 102, which represents one type of his pictures. Nobody will feel constrained to look for another origin for this conglomerate of heads, arms, fish, a worm, etc., than pure caprice. In a similar picture we were able to observe this process from beginning to end. Figure 102 is reproduced here because it dates from 1912 and therefore Klotz's explanation of it can be more easily understood than those of later pictures. Very few of the drawings he made in the course of the years lack such explanations. They appear on the verso



Case 36

**Fig. 102.**

16 × 20 cm.

“General von Wolkern” (Pencil).

or, because Klotz likes to draw on sheets folded into letter format, on the three unused sides; their beginning or special titles often appear on the same side as the picture, as in the present case: “General von Wölkern [pl. of *Wolke* = cloud, therefore General of the Clouds] Exc. Order, Knight pp. Fantastic Drawings Inspired by Clouds.” The text then continues:

“A Glass of Beer.” – ‘The Septant.’

The Madonna looks out from a medal,  
 The carnival after the bell ending work,  
 The winter man from the high north,  
 stands above the man putting on his pants Mr. Korday:  
 The Lady admires the snake hound,  
 which shades resurrected beauty:  
 two carps are there, with the question mouth:  
 Is there copulation in the asylum as well?  
 Startled the whole world looks into it,  
 It is just for you, you without a satchel,  
 next to the pole of the autumn wagon the wine stands in the barrel,  
 the nose is involved, with the cornet for dancing,  
 The essential only into nature,  
 One may push the heart of the bladder,  
 the four winds bag helps one onto the right path,  
 if it's not in the wine, then in the beer glass.

W., 16 August 1912

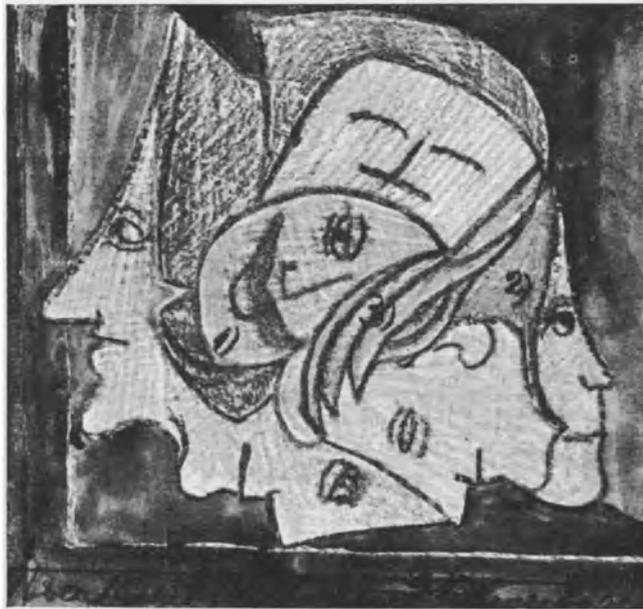
August Klotz of H.

Why do Mr. Schied and Mr. Grotz whet my arm?

We note a tendency here to establish loose relationships between accidental forms within the drawing, as Justinus Kerner did in his blot graphics. The process resembles that used to integrate the words of others into a poem, to complete an acrostic puzzle, or to perform some other kind of versification, tasks usually best performed by the surface virtuosity of the occasional poet and after-dinner speaker. Klotz undoubtedly has some facility and, above all, wit and a rather earthy sense of humor which will become apparent in some of his other drawings, but this poem is by far the clearest he has produced. Elsewhere he did not limit himself so strictly to the attached pictures but instead began to associate freely after first putting down some words resembling signatures; naturally he would immediately be plunged into the limitless.

Of the six faces blended into a dense confusion in Figure 103 three bear the numerals 1 to 3. The caption begins: “1) Upper ball 2) lower ring 3) middle egg bow.” In another direction appears the phrase: “The conglomerate soul 'offendsithee' to the pointed warder: Reuchhead, loisset, flammer,” etc. Then, on the third side, the monstrous words favored by Klotz: “1) Stalkdaggerfishdegreedropeggwhite; 2) Meadowmeatgoosejumper-bowotter; 3) antgoldbirdbeakpincersglass; Starskinburningspinningoffnetbasketweaving-standleatherfinscarpetlousehousefat.” Further,

7000 Morkleaves to spin, so that he will fell the tree, as a nightwatchman blows out the light during daytime = at the mallow wick of the herring soul strings the fallen off fishtail and transport lighting pole into the motherate = the flourburzels of the beercellchalk – as he stepped into the woods and pulled on the etherlinerootstrainweave like a moessmer at the seed bell, he rummaged as ape in the hair feathers of the mimosenmeat Donottouchmer of boxhornapothecarystroke in the girlplateglass the skull's noseheart, the hunting room . . .



Case 36 **Fig. 103.** 19 × 19 cm.  
Six Faces (Pencil and water color).

We shall leave it to the reader to try to fathom the possible relationships of this nonsense (which at least is amusing) to the drawing with the six heads. Like the picture discussed next it was done in 1915, in watercolors, chalk, and crayon, primarily blue and red.

Figure 104 is distinguished from the preceding pictures by the appealing decorative effect it achieves, which even has something pictorial about it. It was probably inspired by cloud formations; the window was probably added when the woman in the bed was already drawn. We cannot deny the piece a certain fragile charm, which probably depends on the sparing but suggestive use of long, languid lines. They are bizarrely enlivened by green dots on a light blue background. The cloud forms are dull red and the background is yellow-brown. The inscription begins this way: "The pocket damage is apostle: you would have the two hats as carp traps under the bed – the waggoner is also brakeman:



Case 36 **Fig. 104.** 23 × 14 cm.  
"Woman in Bed" (Water color).

from Bremen? Probelant: They conduct the evil deed against themselves whereby they want to force the judge into blocking in a general doublelanguagesystemsign not at all . . . The Mrs. Sch. on the rope lies in bed there (– that’s why you are the bridegroom –.)” Later Klotz noted down what the voices apparently say to him during work: “Shout: It’s Schererschensky who would sigh something like that – scissors on the linoleum floor against upper lavatory M 7 – Alette – valet: small room worth.”

Figure 105 once again shows us a product of perfectly formless playfulness and is accompanied by the authentically schizophrenic caption, “Chimneysweeper snow in spring,” in which two contradictions are combined: black and white, and winter and spring. The head in Figure 106, painted in watercolors on newsprint, makes a surprisingly confident and sure impression, but so that the grotesque may not be lacking the picture is called “The Urinepipeopeninghelmet.” Other drawings, like Figure 107, contain hardly any recognizable shapes. A head here, an arm there, an animal body – everything is ordered by accident and given cohesion only by the border and the color distribution. The effect is one of sudden flashes of light. Nevertheless we must not be tempted simply to cite illness as the chief cause for Klotz’s arbitrary play with forms. A look at a side of the familiar Mycenaean gold box in Figure 179 shows better than words that even the freest play with forms in decorating plane surfaces need not be schizophrenic.

A few pictures stand out from the large number of Klotz’s usually original, little works by their more pronounced pointedness which makes it difficult to explain their origins as pure playfulness without admitting that rational components have been given expression, as in caricatures. The points which are made are not unambiguous but rather schizophrenic and dim, as for instance in the almost elegant watercolor in Figure 108: “Cellar, inn, salon, stable in one. Away with the cigar!” As surprising as the title sounds, we can nevertheless show how closely it matches what is actually shown. The cellar is apparently represented by the curved lines on the left, which are to be understood as the edges of a barrel. The inn may be indicated by the fact that the two profiles face each other. The salon is represented by the foppish man and the stable by the ox head



Case 36

**Fig. 105.** “Chimneysweeper Snow” (Water color).

16 × 11 cm.



Case 36 **Fig. 106.** 11 × 12 cm.  
 “The Urinepipeopeninghelmet”  
 (Water color).

in the lower right corner. “Away with the cigar!” refers to the youth resembling Ganymede who, sitting on an eagle, actually drops a cigar. We are no longer surprised that the wing of the eagle simultaneously represents the sweep of hair of the dandy. As we have often observed, such double meanings are characteristic of the schizophrenic imagination. Taken as a whole the picture demonstrates particularly forcefully what we call condensation, amalgamation, and contamination in speech. No fewer than four different scenes are combined in the picture, but not side by side, as in traditional pictures. They are simply represented symbolically by parts of the picture. The same space therefore has to serve all four places equally and, on top of that, open up to release Ganymede. That sounds less credible than it really is, because Klotz surely does not begin with the thought that the picture must represent four places. Instead he just draws as always, playfully and aimlessly, hearing voices at the same time which cannot be evaluated differently than any other inspiration, but which impose themselves more forcefully. While he is delivered up to “inspirations” of various sorts, he considers the forms which he has tossed off with the pencil either by copying or by playful and thoughtless impulses. Various still anonymous forms vibrate sympathetically with his ideas, emotions and all kinds of affective material.

Whatever finally becomes actual surely depends on his emotions and his psychic constellation of the moment. Presumably there will often be conflict between simple recollections and hallucinations, as we know from the self-analyses of other patients (which were



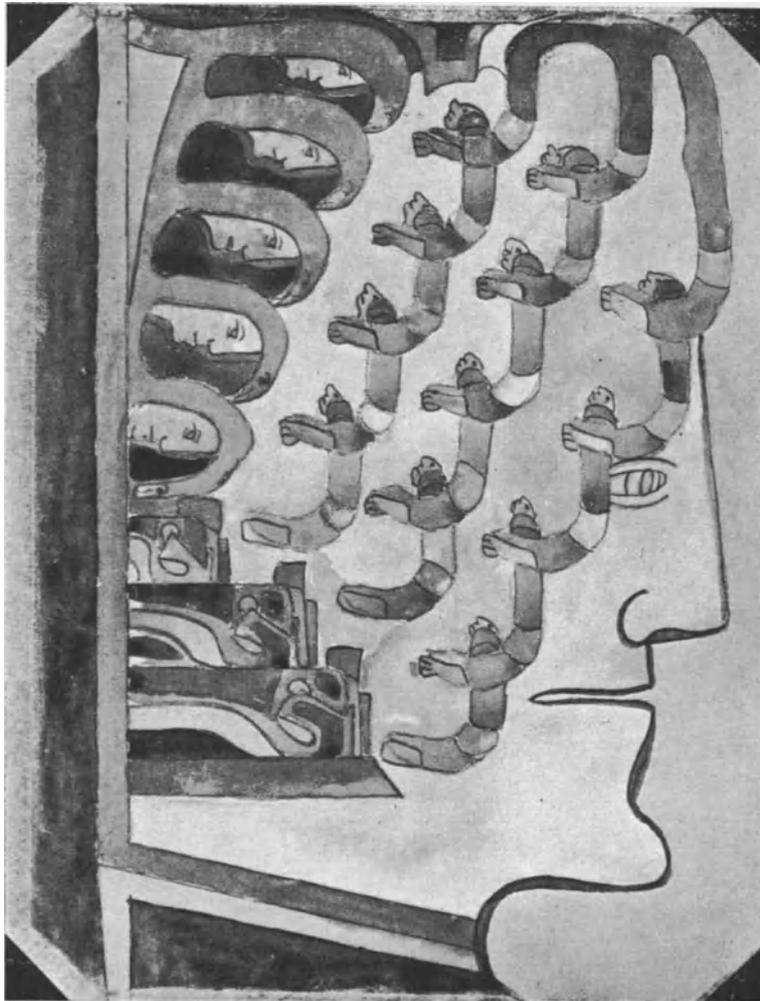
Case 36 **Fig. 107.** “Fox Snails” (Water color). 15 × 6 cm.



Case 36

**Fig. 108.**  
"Cellar, Inn, Salon Stable" (Pencil and water color).

23 × 30 cm.



Case 36 **Fig. 110.** "Worm Holes etc." (Water color). 25 × 33 cm.

not related to drawings, however). At the same time we must realize that hallucinations also feed on existing psychic resources. If we can therefore equate the patient's stream of inspirations substantially with that of a healthy person, the specific distinctive quality must lie in the configurative process itself. Even the ability to draw playfully, without any purpose, is not distinctive. What is distinctive is the free reign given to any idea, however limited, as well as the pleasure taken in making various points which cannot be combined logically but instead remain in the state of unresolved tension which generally precedes any decision and in which everything remains possible. These purely psychological attempts to enter into the schizophrenic world view will be continued more thoroughly later.

We now shift our attention to pictures of a completely different character, in which Klotz demonstrates a compositional severity which one would hardly have expected of him. He has constructed more than 20 large pictures according to generally valid principles of configuration, such as Figure 109. Once again we must acknowledge a change in his original aimless and playful method, even though we may continue to regard it as dominant, because the picture shows that Klotz was struck by nothing other than the charm

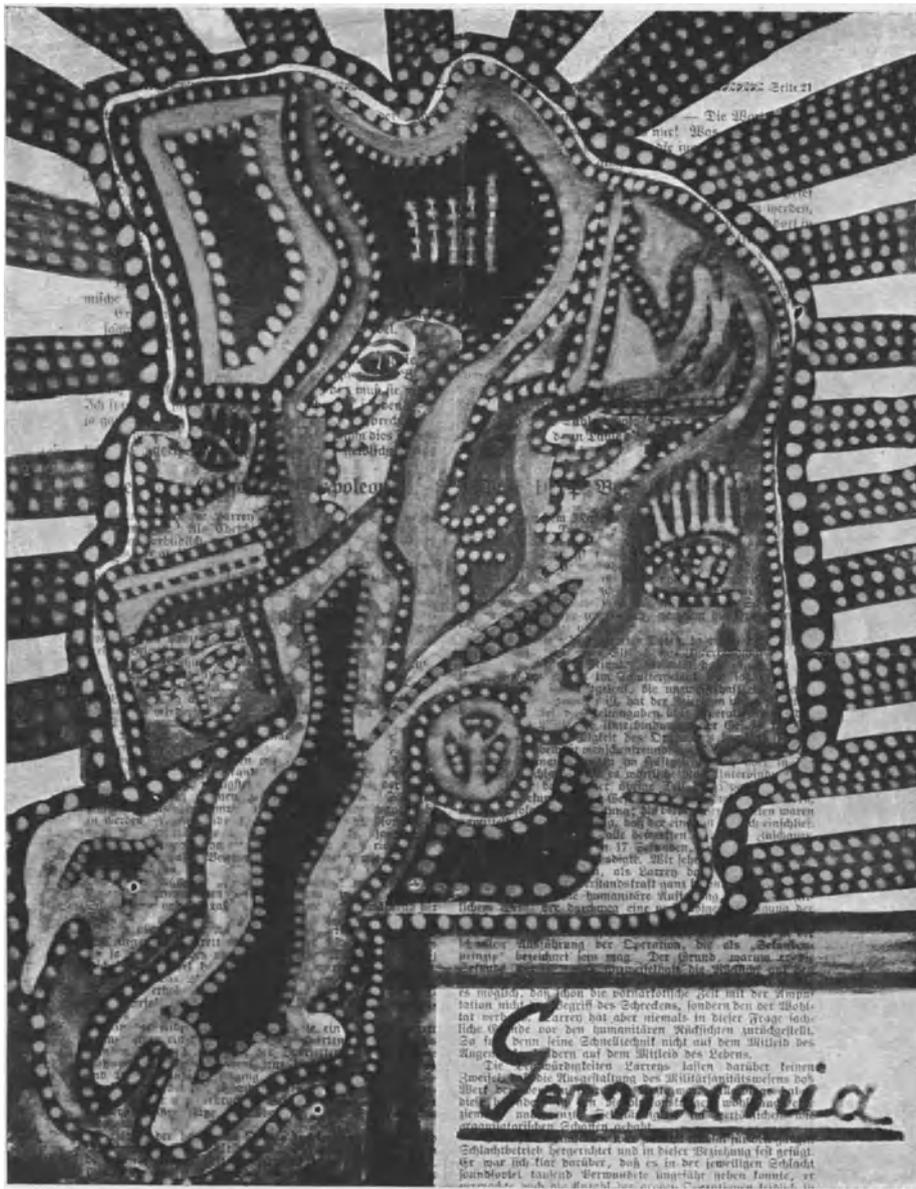


Case 36

**Fig. 109.** Playful-decorative Work (Water color).

26 × 34 cm.

of symmetry ordered about a central axis. He repeats on the right and the left of the axis what he had previously always invented freely. He is so versatile that he never becomes pedantic but adapts himself adroitly to irregularities. He also knows how to integrate profiles easily, like that of the bird below. This bird is one of the few objects which Klotz frequently repeats exactly even though these objects grow out of very different formal situations. It suggests, as every artist knows, that a few forms are so familiar to him that he frequently forces his drawings into a pattern to accommodate them. We can therefore easily imagine that as soon as his bird occurs to him, his wandering pencil makes a curve into which the bird's head, tail, or feet fit. (At the top, incidentally, we again notice the kidney-shaped stones of which we spoke earlier, on p. 134.). He has a mania for dots, shown especially by the row of white dots on colored strips in Figure



Case 36

Fig. 111. "Germania" (Water color).

23 × 29 cm.

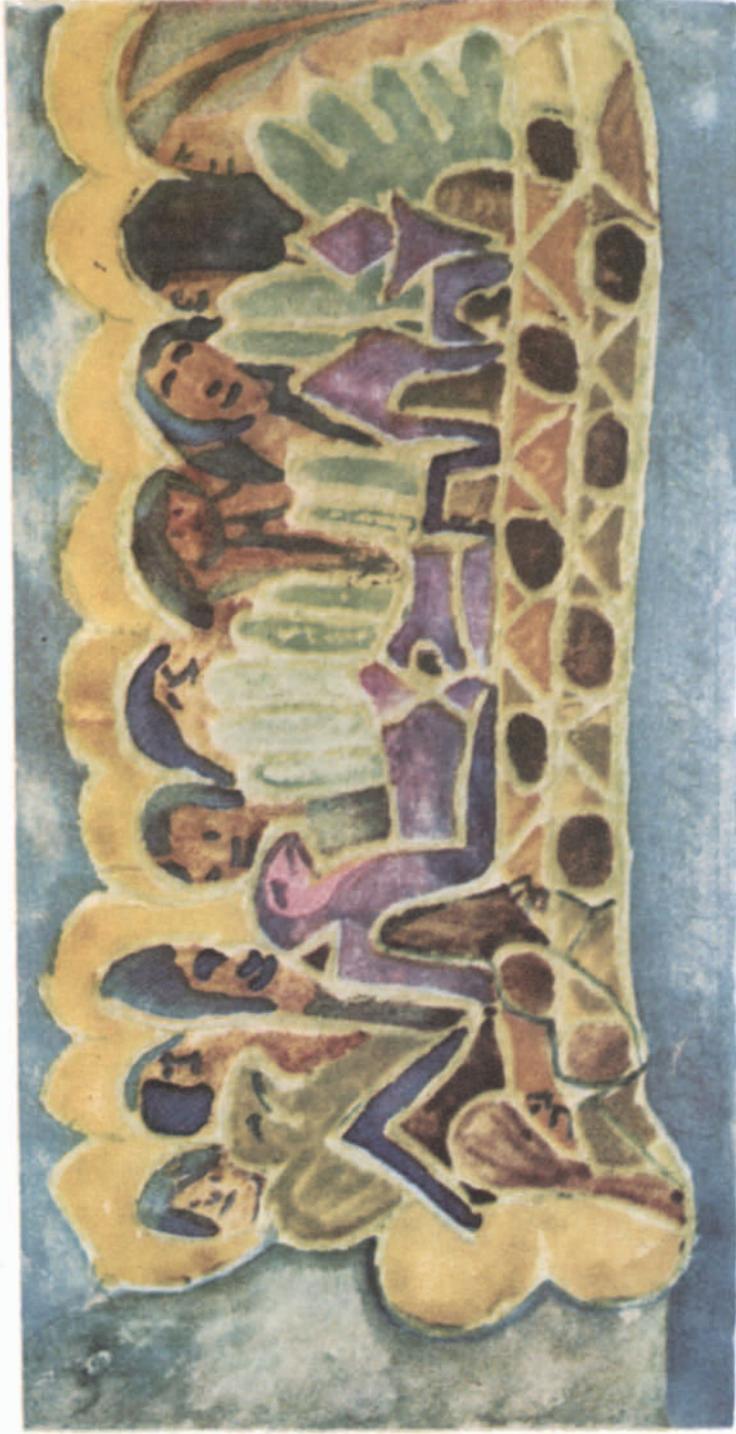
109, which are reminiscent of many Irish miniatures, for example, and also occur on Mycenaean vases. The inscription on the verso has the same character as that of the following picture, Figure 110, which is quoted below.

All the tendencies mentioned so far are combined in the large head in Figure 110, with its peculiar arches. Its monumental solemnity and simplicity make it most unusual. We can probably credit its impact to the assurance Klotz gained in his strictly decorative drawings, yet we can still recognize his earlier playfulness in the arches, which consist of a combination of worms, fingers with nails, and the heads of caterpillars, while at the same time representing the hair. Klotz also applies to this motif the principle of sequence, which he has meanwhile learned to enjoy. The drawing was made in 1919. Its inscription well demonstrates the method of free association he uses today and includes the following passages:

Worm holes (bath faces) worm paths (pianomusicstickteeth) worm strings (spitbathlife of the archlyregallery-tin-timeler-reflections: ad mothersugarmoon in the sevensaltnosewater. The seeingtongue is in the headtonsils of the lowerbodyhoden in the changetwitchfiver of the nosetip ad seesim-calendar 1905 Jordon ad Biblia = torso = yes = donkey bridge = heytraject = stealingholesticker = chestnutwoodghostants = copper red = glassmilk = lakmus = lackeys = calcium: lamb-ear on the stone eye on the heart = sod under the Brunsteiter = cancer: godrock = son = saltsule = Hymenghost = trinity ammonia salmia spiritus veris (antghostwormturn) porcupinefish = caviarstaterholes = im = stomachnoserearmouth "eye" = polish = polizze = thumbs = ladiessleepsilvertrade = ad M. 500000 Y ad Eschrich Zimmermann. 27 March 1919 fingerhackelthumbsladieskidneys = Miss Schwarz (30) Y 'Look at this and give support' (206) lowerfaced – feeler – strontiam – salad Dr.

It only remains to be shown how far Klotz, who for years tirelessly designed and watercolored one drawing after another, achieves serious artistic merit by enormous practice. The "Germania," a watercolor on newsprint, shown in Figure 111, which was done during a recent year, is an example. It is alive with differently positioned heads which probably developed habitually out of accidental conjunctions of lines, but the overall effect of the giant head in its yellow and black wreath of rays, reminiscent of an Athena in the simplicity of its outline as well as in its carriage, is a considerable artistic achievement that withstands any criticism.

"The Egyptian Sick Bed," Figure 112, is one of the few pictures in our collection, however, which even in its scenic aspects has a strong emotional impact in spite of strange formal inconsistencies. Its colors alone make it a symphony of light green and light violet, and it emanates a mild and very subtle magic. The blunt ornamental forms in its lower half may have been intended as a stage set, and have a rigid meaninglessness, as if the picture had been planned as a decorative fantasy. The hawk head of the god Osiris, which Klotz probably found in a periodical, may at first appear to be glazed like majolica and his recumbent body an accident of paint spots. That the head is repeated farther to the left seems like an ill-advised joke. Nevertheless the row of heads in the back, which are also barely and rather crudely hinted at while providing an almost rough, realistic effect in contrast with the crystalline splendor of the colors in front, fuses all the elements into an almost apostolic solemnity. Some of the heads, like the third from the right, have a mildly ecstatic expression and are reminiscent of the heads of the apostles done by Emil Nolde. The sacred tone of the picture is increased by the outline of the bright surface above the heads, which suggests a row of halos by following the curves of the heads.



Case 36

**Fig. 112.** "Egyptian Sickbed" (Water color).

Original size.

No matter how little this picture is unified formally or how obvious the “mistakes,” it has had a most stirring effect on artists of many different schools. The appealing color combination is no doubt partly responsible for this effect, but the basic mood of the picture seems to hide another fascinating component. Somehow it is precisely the contrast between the colorful crystal world – to which our feelings for Egyptian culture respond freely – and the barely alive heads behind it which rouses us. Whether it expresses the temper of the times or has a metaphysical element or whether we are fascinated by the suspended ambiguity of schizophrenic thought patterns, the effect is undeniable. Perhaps it is due to a combination of all these components.

In summary we might say that Klotz, the untrained drawer with a little talent and a lively susceptibility to the visual, who is dominated by a playful urge to act, represents us. He always allows himself to be driven by momentary impulses so that his pictures generally incorporate the unconscious components of pictorial creation in a rare state of purity. We followed his development from simple chaotic rooting around in details to pictures of considerable quality, and at the same time we observed the progressive dissolution of his personality as reflected in his written explanations of the pictures. We can also sum up his character this way: he composes completely passively, almost as a spectator, and afterward tries to interpret his configurations. That explains why Klotz assumes a sort of inspired attitude even though no inspiration actually ever occurs. Although plans and intentions are almost foreign to him he conducts himself as if he expected revelations in the concrete results of his momentary impulses. He does not wish to compose what can be put into words (like the mystic, for instance, who gave us Figure 78) or what he recognizes as part of his psyche. Instead configuration is to him nothing but an endless, aimless, somehow enjoyable game of interpreting forms, out of which suddenly a few pictures from among numerous, meaningless smears approach serious art.

### 3. Peter Moog

Peter Moog, born in 1871, grew up in poverty in the Eifel country. His father, who died at 81, was, according to the mother, occasionally mentally disturbed, but apparently was never in an asylum. A brother became affluent and acquired some education. Other facts about the family are not available. Moog is described as having been a kind, bright boy with a quick grasp and a good memory. In school he was always one of the best pupils. He became a waiter, was said to have led a rather fast life and to have had his fill, as a lively Rhenish youth, of wine, women, and song. Later he lived for a long time on his memories. The physical marks of his dissolute times included gonorrhoea, which effected his glands. He spent his time in the military mainly as the orderly of a major. In 1900, now a head waiter, he married, but the marriage was poor. According to Moog his wife drank up all his earnings and died in 1907 of "drink and water mania." One child from the marriage is alive and well, but two others died young. During the years 1902 to 1907 Moog was the proprietor of his own tavern, which went bankrupt. After he had worked for some more months as the manager of a large hotel, during which he again drank freely, his illness suddenly struck him one day in 1908 with "apoplexy," which was sometimes diagnosed by physicians as "nervous shock" and sometimes as an organic stroke. According to the accompanying symptoms, which we shall describe more closely below, it was nothing other than a primary schizophrenic experience about whose physical origins we know nothing.

Moog's major personality traits can be well described from these data: he is a gifted, mentally adaptable man who, coming from modest rural surroundings, became quite well informed and urbane as a waiter. His Rhenish temperament led him into a somewhat loose life style, alcoholism, and sexual excess, and a bad marriage made him totally rootless. His tendency to socialize seems always to have depended on a knack for puns, ringing phrases, and tall stories which would have made him a favorite tavern keeper with students, but even in childhood he was always creative. Moog's statement that as a schoolboy he greatly enjoyed handicrafts is corroborated by his brother. He neatly carved wooden pyramids, cones, and cylinders for solid geometry instruction, and he liked to draw, especially houses and churches. Later, as a soldier, he claims to have drawn a fortress. During his healthy days he frequently wrote poems as well.

According to Moog's own statements his illness struck as follows. He had been drinking again – a few bottles of Burgeff – when in the morning, while he was working on account books, his mind was suddenly struck as if with 100,000 volts from heaven. He relaxed his arms and called out, "I am an artist, hurrah, I am a great man and have half a million marks." Convulsions ran through his body continuously. On the way to the lavatory he suddenly saw busts of Goethe and Schiller in his imagination and thought he would now become one of them. His brain turned like a coffee mill. He had to pump up and call out, "long live the captain of Köpenick and Zeppelin!" (both of whom happened

to be in the public eye at the time). At the same time he was quite well oriented and even calm. Leaving his hat behind he ran home, where in the afternoon two doctors gave him a tranquilizing powder. He believed the room to be a stage and saw "his own books and poems" in front of him. He was supposed to be taken to an asylum but refused to go because he felt himself to be immensely strong. His heartbeat was "terrifying." He thinks that he had a fever and that he drank 10 bottles of mineral water. About 2 *A. M.* there "occurred slowly, with full consciousness, the parting from life and the walk to the guillotine with all its psychic and physical tortures"; he heard the death knell ring. At sunrise he felt his spirits revive. During the night he had felt himself "ripe for the insane asylum," but now his body, thoughts, speech, and activity were again completely under control as he journeyed to his family home early in the morning – only to return to town after an eerie night. Everything was strange during the trip. He received a very special train ticket which cost an additional 30 cents. The conductors tapped their punches strangely, which meant "here comes a mental case or a criminal." He drank a lot with the hotel proprietor, to whose daughter he had previously wanted to become engaged, but he did not begin to talk about the engagement because he noticed that people seemed to be reacting negatively to him. He lost his job but, through his experience, was "driven to be a poet"; a "kind of higher mystique" had overcome him and he now claimed to write the most beautiful things extemporaneously.

During the ensuing weeks he drifted in many towns. His descriptions of this period contradict themselves and his dates are inconsistent. Presumably he transfers individual earlier experiences into this period of the acute phase of his illness. In any case he seems to have visited the place where he went bankrupt with his tavern and to have annoyed his successor. He was immediately thrown out of his room after a dispute "for disturbing the peace." Next he wished to give literary and humorous lectures and four times rented a hall which was each time refused to him at the last moment. (This is not substantiated and may have been invented.) When he had spent all his money he retreated to his mother at home. A great change had taken place in him, mentally as well as physically. He wanted to become a writer and start his own press and bookshop for the publication of his works, of which he said four volumes were already at hand. An art gallery was then to be added. He claimed to have purchased a basic stock of old art objects as early as two years previously, but had sold them to a dealer. After disputes with relatives which finally led to nightly fights he was finally committed to an asylum, six weeks after his "apoplexy."

Moog's behavior was consistent with what we call "buoyant mania": he felt extraordinarily well, was happy to find himself able to relax in such a congenial environment, found the food excellent, constantly cracked jokes and puns, wanted to celebrate a feast of forgiveness with his family, and wanted to forgive the whole world. At the same time he dropped hints about his supposed ancestry and boasted of his wealth, claiming to have antiques worth one million marks, a hotel, and a castle. His active desires were directed primarily toward an art museum which he wanted to install in the inn he had owned previously. The furniture was already ordered, and he would himself paint two or three pictures daily. He donated a purple robe as well as a gold scepter of his own design to the Madonna of his home town. At the same time he constructed a dirigible out of aluminum and mica holding 3,600 persons. His wealth soon grew to incredible size: "hundreds of billions, a hundred hotels, as many palaces and castles, tobacco plantations, forests and game, orchards – a heart filled with love – a royal crown! Crowned with ermine! Decorated with brocade! A growing morning red sky, to my goddess, signed,

Friedrich von Schiller.” That brings us to Moog’s writings, which include ceremonious pleadings to the hospital’s administration, the mayor of his home town, to “Carmen Sylva, Crown Princess of Greece,” and especially to his imaginary fiance, Amalie von Pisack (from the idiomatic “pisacken,” meaning to annoy, aggravate, torture) whose address was once stated to be the “Realm of Heaven, 500 Paradise St., c/o the Angels in the Sugar Box.” A few typical examples of Moog’s verse and prose will demonstrate the superficial adroitness with which he hides the frequent meaningless passages and half obscures his slips, but which often lets him achieve a certain literary gloss.

But quietly, so quietly the shadows move past my eyes and with their wings paint dear beautiful pictures on the clouds of heaven, on the blue firmament. When a muse comes occasionally and agitates a brooding man, a little goblin pulls both my ears. I slept – I dreamed of heaven – of happiness – of the victory of love!

Das schönste Schloß im deutschen Reich,  
 Ich bring es meiner Liebe dar,  
 Der Lilie diesen Palmenzweig,  
 Und was mein Land noch sonst gebar,  
 Forellen blau, im Enten-Teich.  
 Der Fürstin einen Zollern-Aar,  
 Auch treuste Liebe bis zum Tod  
 Mein Morgenstern, mein Abendroth.

Friedr. von Schiller.

The most beautiful castle in the German empire,  
 I present to my love,  
 to the lily this palm branch  
 And whatever else my country produced,  
 Blue trouts in the duck pond.  
 To the princess a Zollern eagle,  
 Also faithful love unto death,  
 My morning star, my red evening sky.

Friedr. von Schiller.

Often we find a confrontation of crudely sensual and of ideal love, and lustfully enraptured virgins:

Wo immer dann die lichten Zwiegestalten  
 In Ruhm gebahrt, die zarten Hände falten,  
 Da flieht der Wüstling, wird ihm nichts ergänzt –  
 Urkundlich fehlt ihm dort das höchste, schönste Recht –  
 Was ihm ein zottig Weib oftmals kredenzt –  
 Am Freudentisch genießt’s manch loser Specht...  
 Ein Heiligtum sei jene schönste Welt,  
 Ein Lorbeerhain! Ein Ruhm! Ein Sternenzelt!  
 Grace et Gloire, wer immer sich vergißt  
 Mit Liebe nur und Liebesgleichen mißt,  
 Dem wird der Himmel hier auf Erden blüh’n  
 Ein Kampf um’s Paradies muß Männerschultern zwingen,  
 Es soll am Herd die Sonnenblume glüh’n  
 Die Anmut fleht, schier betend soll er ringen,  
 Um jene Freuden – sittsam – reich – gepaart,  
 Wo blüht das Glück! Wo Liebe aufgebahrt!

Wherever then the bright dual figures,  
 Brought forth in fame, the tender hands folded,  
 The libertine flees, given nothing in return –  
 According to documents he there lacks the highest most beautiful right –  
 Which a lewd woman often granted him –  
 At the table of joy many a loose sparrow enjoys it...  
 May that most beautiful world be a sacrament,  
 A grove of laurel! Fame! A tent of stars!  
 Grace et Gloire, whoever forgets himself  
 Measures himself only by love and love's equals,  
 For him heaven will glow here on earth  
 A battle for paradise must force manly shoulders,  
 The sunflower must glow at the hearth,  
 The charm flees, he must struggle prayerfully  
 For those joys – modestly – rich – paired,  
 Where happiness blooms! Where love is displayed!

Wild roses are beautiful, but easily shed their petals, have loose stems, have no aroma,  
 are picked by many people and then tossed aside. Carelessly – until a storm squashes them,  
 picks them apart, – completely – a shame! – Therefore culture – art – it ennobles, brings  
 the aroma, with the full godly bud which is inaccessible to any undeserving human hand,  
 and would rather dissolve in the storm or let itself be destroyed by Zeus, and cries to  
 heaven, for help, before it – surrenders! “I anticipated storms, and came to help you. A  
 chap like me has experience. More than once have I kept watch at the bed of a beautiful  
 good maiden without disposing. A holy place has always been holy for me. I can say that  
 with a clear conscience.” “Do you not hear the harmony of my soul and my mind. I am  
 about to build great and beautiful things, to the glory of mankind, the fame of the German  
 people,  
 to me the palms,  
 to the German woman the laurels,  
 to the maiden the myrtle,  
 to the youth freedom,  
 to the man an oak leaf,  
 to age a crown,  
 to death and the grave victory  
 in resurrection. Scorn to the coward.  
 ‘Long live the last judgment!’

All these passages have a manic character, even in their hasty, uneven handwriting  
 and their arrangement on the sheet. This diagnosis agrees with that made by the first  
 asylum which Moog entered. Many a passage containing the kind of pathos indulged  
 in by veterans' organizations could almost serve as the perfect example of manic expres-  
 sion, for example the following addressed to the physicians of the institution:

I am very happy to have met and become acquainted with so many fine gentlemen, so  
 much amiability, feelings of opposition, such iron stalwart men. I would be gratified to  
 be accepted as one of you, in a certain sense, insofar as origins and education permit.  
 You will find in me only the courteous, always considerate socializer who is not concerned  
 about a large dose of humor and bad luck of the artist and abuse and wire.

Moog ceremoniously donated 12 examples of his collected works to his home town  
 after having given up legal action against his relatives for their behavior toward him,  
 in the interest of the “welfare of the country” and “his dear compatriots,” but his active

urge and euphoria did not long continue. Soon came times of irritation and depression. Often he was found in tears, and he complained of nightly tortures. Then again he praised the nightly visits of “ghosts, genies, and graces who promise him the genius of the drama,” felt himself “transformed electrically by poetical talent and creative power,” and “wonderful thoughts and poems were set free in his head as if by explosions.”

We found it impossible to distinguish any acute phase of Moog’s illness. From early on he worked peacefully in the house or the garden, at the same time that, as “poet prince,” he covered as much paper with writing as he could find. His irritability increased over the years. He tends now to unprovoked outbursts of anger against fellow patients, nurses, and physicians. Only the presence of women immediately puts him in a good mood and even produces an enthusiastic and slightly foolish ecstasy. At the moment nothing definite can be learned from him about the role of hallucinations, but his medical history reports that he becomes newly engaged every few days, converses eagerly with his fantasy bride, and hears her speak. Then again he shows signs of megalomania: he calls himself owner of an estate and wants to promote one of his officials telegraphically; every time the man lifted his spade was worth a million. Or Moog feels himself persecuted: a gentleman inspecting the institution had put his feet in irons. He suddenly falls into manic excitement during a period of quiet work, says that at an inn, where in the absence of the proprietor he can tap as much beer as he can swallow, he is about to experience the most beautiful moment of his life; and he telegraphs and writes nonsense messages in all directions. One day he collected pieces of glass and stones in the garden, and now estimates the value of these “treasures” in the millions. He promotes a piece of metal to a relic which protects him from death and destruction. Despite his confused and deluded actions he performed valuable services for the institution as an office worker for several years, until his irritable obstinacy and delusions again confined him to his section.

Today Moog is occupied mainly with housework which leaves him time enough to compose masses and paint pictures. He is a short, somewhat thin man with a large head, thin, dark hair and penetrating, distrustful, dark eyes. When a visitor arrives he moves hesitatingly with careful and dragging steps, bows very devoutly, and speaks in an unctuous, consciously polite and saccharine tone while averting his eyes. Often a fleeting superior smile appears at the corners of his mouth, as if he were referring to secrets. When he makes important points he assumes a lecturing or preaching manner, and makes a few expansive gestures. Even when his conversation becomes freer and more natural he repeatedly hints at his higher vocation. He expresses himself fluently and shows little confusion in what he says.

We know the following antecedents to Moog’s drawing and painting to be certainly true; even as a boy in school he showed an explicit creative tendency. Aside from drawing buildings which, according to his own statements, he copied from calendars, he was attracted by basic three-dimensional forms and carved them for use in geometry class. Later, until 1912, he seems to have tried drawing only rarely. On the other hand, he liked to look at pictures, especially in the churches of Cologne and in the museum – at least he says so now. At the beginning of his illness he also often mentioned his love of antiques. The foregoing tells us that he had an unusually lively reaction to shaped objects and occasionally also tried his hand at creating them. To these inclinations he added the impulse to verbalize, in which playful, symbolic, and metaphoric inclinations dominate his copying and ordering tendencies, whereas his verse construction shows dexterity and variety of rhythm, features which tend to impose some order. We can, if we are so inclined, find the growth of a decorative tendency in his preference for flowery language.

During 1912 Moog at first copied some picture postcards, of which unfortunately none can be found. On the other hand, a brown carton remains from about that time, on which he has copied, again from a postcard, a villalike structure under trees, using crayons and watercolors. The picture shows that his form conceptions were relatively clear and that he had experience in their reproduction, but it completely lacks the kind of perspective and spatial representation which would immediately indicate a practiced drawer. Moog himself praised his first works as “pompous paintings” valued in the millions of marks. In short, he approached painting fully convinced that he, the great poet, would also be a very great painter if he only troubled himself to transfer to canvas what was alive within him.

Now we face the most surprising turn: this saccharine admirer of women, this worldly waiter and rough, earthy barkeep feels himself called to paint saints! The exact moment when he became aware of his vocation cannot be determined. Nobody noticed any prominent changes in Moog’s behavior. We therefore can rely only on statements he made subsequently, from the year 1920 on, to explain the fact that, with the exception of the piece just mentioned, he painted only images of the saints of the most dignified sort. He claims to have vowed two years earlier not to smoke or drink but to live like a monk. His pictures probably all belong to this period. We must postpone the discussion of the psychic aspects until the end in order to gain some important insights into his work by looking at his pictures directly.

“The Last Supper,” “The Last Judgment,” and “The Destruction of Jerusalem” are the earlier of the pictures reproduced and date to 1918; the three remaining ones were done in 1920. “The Last Supper,” Figure 113, is clearest in its construction and most comprehensible in its motifs. In its center, on an altar table, a giant Madonna is enthroned and holds a crucifix, with the cross diagonally across her lap. In front of the altar is a small Christlike priest with a beard and a halo, and a chalice in his hand. Believers kneel in the foreground. One motif is built on top of another, strictly along the central axis, and each is spread out as much as possible so that overlaps are held to a minimum. The candelabra on both sides of the altar are unsupported. They are primarily decorative and Moog has not tried to provide them with realistic bases. A great angel with a sword stands guard in the lower left corner so that the unworthy will not be able to push their way in. “The holy family is depicted in the middle of the left margin during their flight into Egypt, and Joseph and Jesus carry knapsacks.” Opposite this scene, on the right, “Tobias, taking leave, is blessed by his father. Tobias carries a satchel onto which he has strapped a boot. Next to him stands the accompanying angel.” The humility of the blessing gesture of the father belongs to Moog’s finest achievements. Higher up, on opposite sides, are the Good Shepherd and a pelican nursing its young with its own blood. The apparently completely original contraposition of the two, which has been boundlessly admired by well known Catholic mystics, and the equally original arrangement of the group of pelicans are the most noteworthy parts of the picture’s contents. Whereas the Journey to Egypt might easily suggest the wanderings of Tobias, which are almost as familiar and in fact are often associated, the Good Shepherd is traditionally a crowning piece in himself, or he is associated with Jesus in other ways, but presumably never with the pelican. If this deeply meaningful combination is really Moog’s own we must give him credit for a truly creative trait, because the combination is not merely significant but almost inspired, and shows a high degree of autonomy in the arrangement of liturgical symbols: the Good Shepherd who devotes himself equally to every lamb, and the pelican which nurses its own with its heart’s blood.

The structure of the pelican group also shows once again the dreamlike sureness with which an unspoiled and unpracticed talent finds very stylish solutions. The central axis and the diagonals of the rectangle alone bear the axes of the bodies and wings. The upper half belongs to the mother bird, its head bent down and its wings raised. The three youngsters stretch their long snoutlike beaks toward the breast from below with greedy deliberation. The breast, done in red dots, glows like a bed of roses against its steel-blue background. All the elements of the picture are tentative, uncertain, and without any formal conception, yet the total effect is one of mystical exaltation of the kind we would most likely expect to find in ancient Latin hymns. Moog once insisted that he had had the idea about the pelicans as long as he could remember, that it might be derived from a symbol in his home town church – but he is not sure that there is such a picture there. Perhaps it was due to a vision. It also means the Trinity. “All ideas are rooted in childhood, after all,” he says. The church in his home town is new and therefore not listed in the directories of art, and direct information could not be obtained because the town has become Belgian since the war.

Among the picture’s other features, the robe of the Madonna is especially fascinating. It is composed of many narrow and very colorful strips which follow the lines of the body loosely, each strip being decorated with its own ornamental pattern. The overall effect of this playful riot of colors, in which nobody will be able to discover any rules, is almost monumental. Formally the arrangement seems closest to that used in carpets. The whole sheet is covered with forms. Every empty space not covered by the major scenes is filled with geometric patterns which nevertheless often coalesce into three-dimensional shapes, particularly small towers of all kinds, and crystalline forms. They indicate the return of Moog’s liking for such shapes, which he used to carve while guarding cattle. We see now how the strangeness shown by the picture on first glance dissolves into many understandable and even profound details, and the carpet coloration, when we recognize the parts, turns the the picture into a complicated but nevertheless meaningful and in many respects appealing – work of art? More later about this problem.

Moog has provided extensive explanations for “The Last Judgment,” Figure 114, which we quote in part:

In the center above the crucifix Christus descends from heaven with the scales, with great power and majesty, surrounded by angels with trumpets and avenging angels with swords. Above them is God the Father holding court; he has opened the great book of sins of the people and is also surrounded by angels. Stars and the fires of heaven fall in the whole center part of the picture – as well as the sun or Jupiter and the moon or Venus [the large heads to the right and left of Christ at chest height]. David sits in the balcony of his house, below the seven avenging angels, surrounded by his retinue, and takes part in the judgment. Purgatory with the saved souls who will enter heaven surrounds the crucifix. The saved are partly just rising from the grave and therefore not yet cleansed. Some gather the blood from Christ’s wounds.

Below we see flickering flames. Those figures which are completely visible are already escaping the flames of purgatory, among them three scholars, two patriarchs with palm sprigs and crowns, and a few spinsters who led hard, working lives. To the left, at the edge of hell, a ladder leads to heaven. At the feet of the judge of the world a man is pushing by who has barely made it past hell – he is supposed to represent Cohn, a lawyer from X.

The left side pictures hell. In the center the damned slide down a long straight razor [as in the chamber of horrors in Castan’s Panoptikum!]. Satan, Lucifer, and all the greats of hell are gathered with all the devil worms, as pictured in old-fashioned homemaking magazines [Moog claims to remember this scene from his eighth year]. Above the devils are



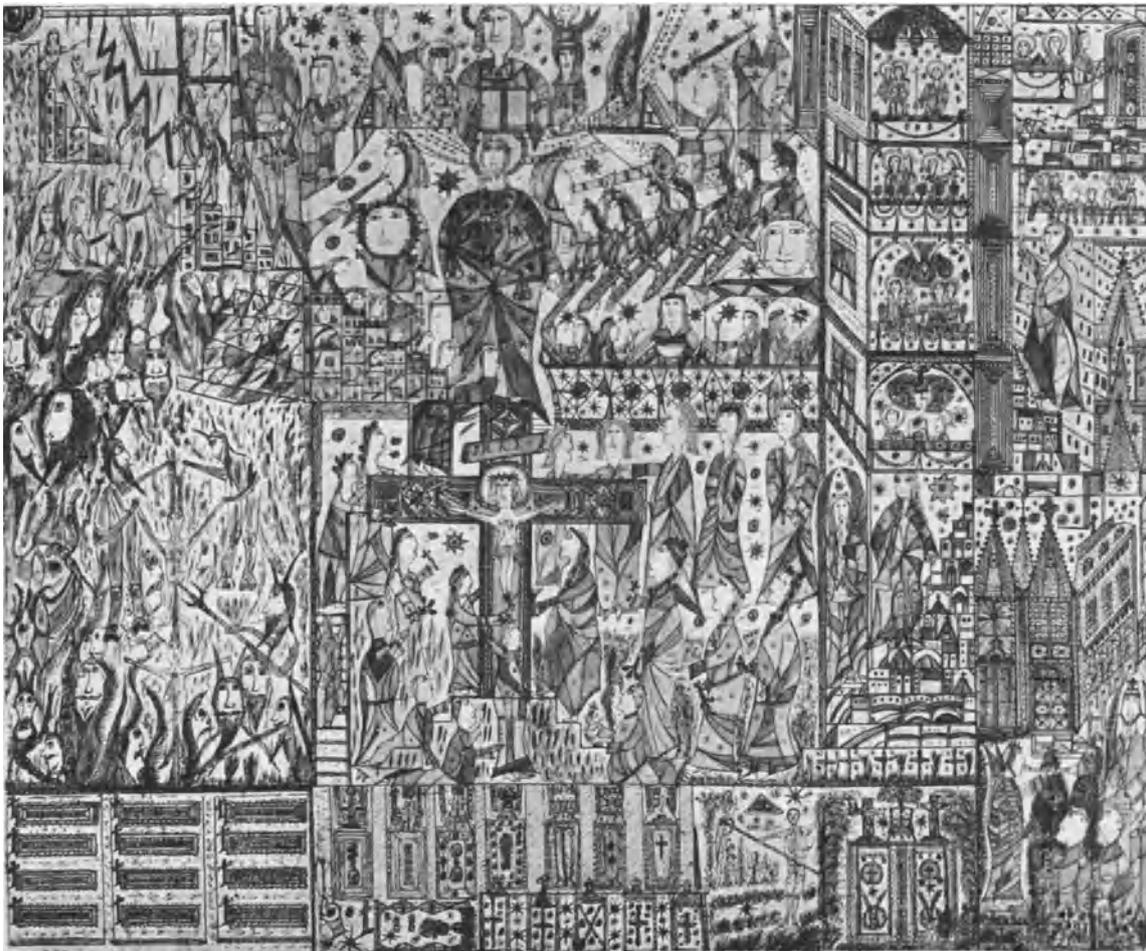
Case 16

Fig. 113. Altar with Priests and Madonna (Water color).

20 × 28 cm.

damned women who, to show their lewdness, are very décolleté. On top are naked figures who are already condemned and therefore need no longer fetch their clothes. Others among the damned wait in vain for salvation behind fences and in dungeons. The right side of the picture represents heaven. At the bottom are two saints with two angels, above them St. Peter's in Rome, through which salvation is announced. To the left, beside the church, is the heavenly Jerusalem as it expands gradually into the castles of heaven and becomes more beautiful. Above it are four heavenly balconies. To the right a female saint climbs up and pulls a bell rope to get to the upper regions of heaven. The row of graves below means several things. To the left are 12 dark graves of the damned, and next to them the graves of the resurrected, which are decorated with beautiful grave-stones and a vat of incense. [There is also a nice Biedermeier group: death with his scythe, stars, the eye of God as it falls on us unexpectedly, and also the family grave for the parents of Moog's youthful girl friend.] The five transparent memorials above it denote the graves of small spirit children. People said that when a person masturbated he killed an angel; the graves therefore are those of children who were the victims of such persons, among them my son Emil who died at the age of seven months.

Once again the result of a complete explication, using the author's own descriptions, shows that for the most part he illustrated eminently sensible ideas. The individual scenes are joined somewhat arbitrarily, like pictures cut out and pasted up by a child, and there



Case 16

**Fig. 114.** "Last Judgment" (Ink and water color).

45 × 36 cm.

are always geometric and crystalline forms as filler, but the only absurdity lies in the small graves of children killed by onanism, and, understood correctly, even that is not without wit.

Figure 115 represents only the upper part of “The Destruction of Jerusalem,” which constitutes two-fifths of this very complicated picture and can be easily understood by itself. At the beginning the scene to be represented was, “Elias kidnaps his bride Aphrodite from the ruins of Jerusalem in a fiery carriage,” but Moog changed his plans for various reasons. As a sacred artist he could not paint nude figures, and Aphrodite, after all, could not be painted otherwise. It finally occurred to him to have Elias kidnap the Madonna instead because “the Madonna is the protector of Christian art, and if I bring her into it I gain the most power for the creation of the picture.”

Moog’s detailed explanation of this part of the picture is so characteristic of him that it must be quoted completely:

The head with the dragon is a poem by Schiller or Goethe – I’m not sure which – and a certain relationship must exist between poetry as prophecy and the execution of my picture. The fight with the dragon is a tragedy – and in itself that is really the most noble thing in the world – physicians have tragedies too – and when these are surmounted one gains insight. I wanted to symbolize this by the killing of the dragon. The prophet Elias sits in the front of the carriage; his right hand is on the brake so that he can stop the carriage immediately. He can also brake with his right foot. The brakes are of my own design. The whole carriage is suspended on coil springs which are attached to the axles. They are also of my own design. The carriage moves in its suspension in such a way that one can tip it, which makes the bells ring. In the back of the carriage sits the prophet Habakuk, with the crucifix banner in his hand. He is the guardian saint of the whole carriage. In the center sits the Madonna with the Child Jesus and has in her hand a document, the confirmation of the destruction of Jerusalem. I have shown the Madonna on a journey, hence there are suitcases and cartons and all kinds of things [above the Madonna]. The paint on the carriage is that of a postal coach. In front of the carriage are seven knights of St. George on horses, some of whom fight with the dragon and kill it. The last two knights have no lances; here the horses are also attached more closely to the pole. These can save the wagon by themselves, even if the other five are killed. On the next to last horse is a case for a carbine, as well as bridles and saddlery, everything luxurious and extraordinary. The two hindmost knights have only to drive, the five in front fight with the dragon. They have lances with special protective shields. When they wound the dragon the blood cannot spurt into their faces. Also, the protective shield inhibits the thrust so that it does not go too deep. This shield is of my own design. One knight directs his horse by exerting pressure with his legs. It bites the dragon, stomps it to death. Besides that it is in parade position, making the knight’s thrust easier. Below and between the horses is the dragon with many heads, tails, and legs. With one leg it has anchored itself in the earth. At the top of the picture is the fiery reflection in the clouds of the burning Jerusalem. In one spot one can just see the rising morning sun, in another the evening star. This is to show that the fight lasted from morning to evening.

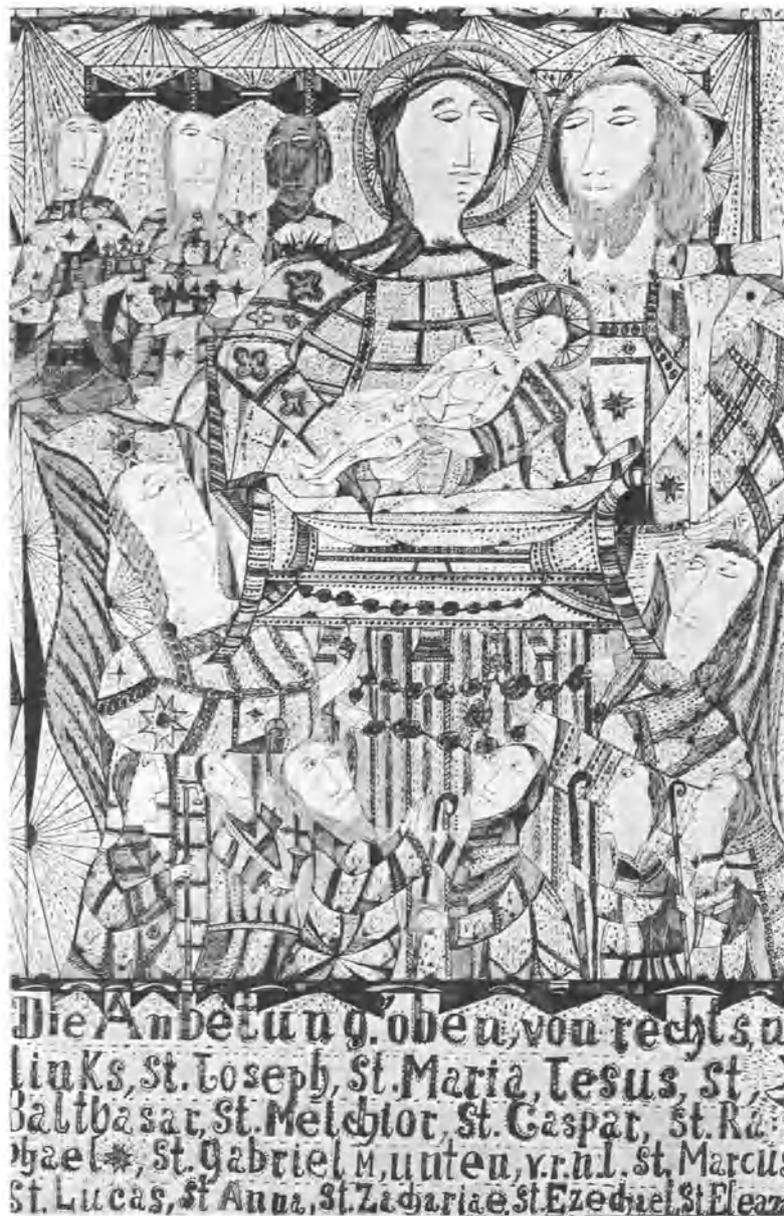
Whereas our observations of Moog’s first pictures proved how much understanding he still had, this description of the fight of the knights of St. George makes a completely different impression. No matter how plump and childish and false the details, especially of the horses, may have turned out, no one would deny the picture’s power. In contrast, all of Moog’s explanations are not only irrelevant or annoying in their concern with minor matters, but have to be described as objectively feebleminded. Not even the few original ideas – that the dragon anchors himself in the ground with his foot or that the knights have shields on their lances to protect them from the spurting poisonous dragon



Case 16

**Fig. 115.** Detail from “Fight of the Knights of St. George and Madonna” (Ink and water color).

50 × 18 cm.



Case 16      **Fig. 116.** Madonna (Ink and water color).      21 × 32 cm.

blood – can make any difference. There remains the surprising fact that the numerous original and meaningful formal thoughts emerge from, and are shaped by, an inexperienced mental patient full of foolish and feeble-minded trifles. The secret may be that his ideas deal so freely and arbitrarily with customary concepts which we are accustomed to seeing only in very fantastic art, especially grotesque art. We may be able to accept a whole gang of knights of St. George instead of St. George himself fighting a many-headed dragon, because the group as such interests us. We even accept willingly the kaleidoscopically colorful carriage with the prophets and the Madonna. But as an inspiration the combination of the groups remains senseless, and as a picture, jarring. We refuse, in other words, to acknowledge the pictorial unity inflicted on us because



Case 16

**Fig. 117.** Descent from the Cross and Pietà (Water color).

40 × 45 cm.

we find ourselves challenged neither by form nor content but only by the caprice of the painter, which we have found very unpersuasive.

“The Adoration,” Figure 116, is a very simple drawing which is strictly conventional in content. We are therefore assured of some unity right from the beginning and can forgo a more detailed discussion of this brightly colored work except for pointing out a neat idea. The figures resembling rays which dominate the edge on the left and on top, and which are made of bright multicolored dots and strokes shown also on and between the human figures, have been derived by Moog from snow crystals. After all, he intended to show a white Christmas. That the stars of rays with red centers are attached to the bases of people’s necks suggests the occult, in which such emanations, especially from the neck, are assigned great significance.

Moog’s last two large pictures show him trying successfully to place a major scene in the dominant, central position. “The Descent from the Cross,” Figure 117, is distinguished by its lucidity, particularly that of its two main parts. We are tempted to think that he quite consciously used special methods to create the illusion of space. The diagonally placed ladders almost suggest a domed room. The grand arrangement of the Pietà below it with the glowing yellow and blue circles does not quite fit into the mainly red and green general scheme, but at least subordinates itself completely within the format of the independent top half. The sepulcher with the two shepherds on the left and the garden on the right are easily understood. Nobody will deny that this piece, because of its unified composition and color, has a genuine dignity.

In “The Sermon on the Mount,” Figure 118,

Christus is shown shortly before the beginning of his way of the cross. Jerusalem rises behind him. Four sunflowers turn toward him and receive their light from him. I chose it as the queen of flowers, which I intend symbolically, of course. Next to them one sees great mullein which as you know is closely related to medicine. And then I put roses all around. Two angels hold the crown. One sees listeners on the right and left. In front, at the right, the time of pregnancy is shown, at the very front the most senior woman in the village, called on for protection, next an old spinster or woman from the hills who is familiar with herbs – a herb hag, as we call her. All the people shown are saints of that time. As a painter of saints I am allowed to paint only those who have been declared saints, nothing from the present. Behind these figures the protective guard – a kind of Roman legion – behind them again the old fathers, also protective and also thought of as husbands of the women. They are patriarchs or patricians – that means about the same thing. At the right in front young Roman guards between the ages of 20 and 30. For these heads I have recalled a lot of students in X. Above on the left five lecturers aged between 30 and 40. The bell, rung by St. Peter, invites people to devotions. Next I have portrayed myself, also pulling on the rope. Above me there is a seraphim, *i. e.* a guardian angel.

Moog has also combined rather neat notions and grotesque absurdities into detailed explanations. Here we shall speak about only one element which casts a surprising light on his basic psychic attitude. After he had referred to the flock of sheep in the upper left corner, which includes the lamb of God, in discussing the various races and tribes, and had said that recognizing the rams was “a subject all by itself,” he elaborated on the steer, ox, and cow in the upper right corner and then talked about the squirrel, which symbolizes celibacy for him, as it was also of great value to apothecaries, men of science, and others who would recognize secrets.

After some hesitation Moog finally propounded, as revealed knowledge which hardly anyone besides himself suspected, a kind of theory of sexual differentiation to which

the ram was important, viz. twice in his life he had “seen a creature in a vision, half man, half animal, mediating between science, art and men, something of a center corresponding harmoniously with all sides; even the physiognomy was man and animal at once.” This apparition therefore serves as the ideal center and orientation point of his system of the “three races in every tribe” which must be discussed in another context. At the moment we shall say only that among men there exists, besides the virile, potent, and marriageable race, a second which, while physically similarly constructed and inclined, must waste its strength in the professions (“passion then fulfills itself in mental work, in purity in the vocation”). It is that of the hermaphrodites! The third group is that of the theologians – they are born pure, will not falter, and are physically different. Among women there are, first, the marriageable, second, the hermaphrodites who are constructed like men and are to serve the exalted cause in celibacy as nuns or teachers, and third, those with still another physique, especially the housekeepers of the clergy: like the latter they carry a testicle within themselves as a sacred object. Several other quotations make it clear that Moog feels not just a vague eroticism but rather pure physical sexuality. He describes a scene in another picture as follows: “The Vanitas has given birth to a spiritual child of vice and does not know what to do with it. The Walkyrie, a most wise



Case 16

**Fig. 118.** “Sermon on the Mount” (Ink and water color).

58 × 30 cm.

woman and protector, holds her hand over the child in order to heal Vanitas, who is mentally ill. Below that are faces which are corrupted by vice and distorted; they represent the inherited sexual illnesses and show the various characters of the vice. Furthermore, failings of the body are hinted at, for instance swollen glands, tonsils, etc. In the very center is the picture of the reconciling Messiah.”

On talking with Moog after reading these passages we received an even stronger impression that he lives in continuous conflict with his sexuality. He strives for extravagant ideals and emphasizes his vocation as a painter of saints so compulsively because he apparently feels the need to atone for his sinfulness, and his special vow to live as a celibate and to avoid alcohol and tobacco is quite consistent with the need. He believes that by the change in his life he has recovered his old strength and is what he was at 18. He thanks his confessor and the church that he has been living so cleanly for three years now. “Now I need the old strength that I was able to save in earlier years to create the sacred pictures. Religious art is inborn and depends on a virtuous way of life, not on skill or experience. That produces only dilettantes. The Lord simply told me: one mistake, fellow, and you’ll get no more. That showed me the way.”

These naive and direct formulations of the ancient mysterious interplay between inspiration, vocation, and the exploitation of one’s own powers (unambiguously understood by Moog as the sublimation of the sexual libido or, even more crudely, the sexual product) seem to be relevant beyond the Moog case. We often find the same concepts hinted at by healthy as well as ill persons, but they are seldom expressed so tritely or pathetically as by Moog. The equations, sexuality = sin and purity = excess of strength, return in numerous variations in Moog’s expressions. Even a “standard of food suitable for one of his position” and additional bread rations are then credited to his excess of strength as well as to his appeal to God. In his efforts to assure himself of purity and strength he goes so far as to try to deny his marriage. He was married twice but only “morganatically, in an artificial marriage. Since the death of my wife I live alone, and my isolation proves that I was married only in the transmigration of souls.” Because of the transmigration he also knows Oceania, the sixth continent. “Sometimes something happens, after all, that never existed; a professional photographer for instance can take all kinds of things out of a drop of water, a drop of blood, the air, that exists not materially but only immaterially. That’s why many things we now know may never have existed materially.” The meaning of these observations, which again are typical of Moog, is surely something like this: “I do not know what is real and what is not; what seemed most real to me they called illusion; the things that made me suffer even in recollection I am supposed to continue to bear as real experiences. Might not my memory be illusion just like my hallucinations?”

Moog reports as follows about his drawing and painting procedures: when he begins he has a vague overall plan in mind. He first sketches heads and outlines, and perhaps the folds of clothing, with a pencil. Only then does he think about what the groups might mean and establishes a motif, which sometimes can later be altered. The large pieces took him two months. He never used models, but “I find hundreds of faces in a floor mosaic or a speckled wall – God favors man with His fortune. Those are presents for those who serve Him with art . . . I often feel the power vibrating in the hand so that often it comes out all right in ink right away; but usually I have to outline in pencil.” Originally all his pictures were intended for the transept of the Cologne cathedral. He also planned pictures for the large common room of the asylum. He hands his pictures over without hesitation. “The moment that I demand money my vocation would be gone;

that would be simony. When I have handed the things over they are paid for. All of that serves to pay off my indebtedness – I bought a hotel at that time and still owe a part of the price.” “Indebtedness” is once again charged with a double meaning, of obligation to God because of sin and of monetary debt to men.

#### 4. August Neter

August Neter, born in 1868, is the son of a Swabian bank cashier who died in 1871 of smallpox. His mother lived more than 80 years and was healthy. Nervous or mental illnesses did not occur in the family. Neter is the youngest of nine children. As a boy he was bright and learned easily, becoming a mechanic after having attended a secondary school for seven years. In the meantime he served in the army but was not promoted – for lack of interest, in his opinion. His adventurousness led him to travel far and wide; to Switzerland, France, and even America. After he had worked as a mechanic in various large German cities he founded his own business in a university town in 1897, which fared quite well for 10 years. We know about his years of travel only that he had syphilis and was treated with unguents. Later he married. The marriage remained childless. We have the following picture of Neter, based on the meager information available about his personality. He was a talented, ambitious man with a liking for adventure. While he would pursue his plans energetically for a while, he could also be stubborn and therefore become indifferent when something would turn out not to be to his liking. His first letters show a certain facility which, while not elegant, nevertheless betrays the world traveler; and he had a highly temperamental and expressive style. At least we find this much of a reflection of his original character in the relatively orderly letters written during the early phase of his illness. Unfortunately it is impossible to gain any insight into the sexual difficulties which seem to have been constitutional with him. Everything we know about him speaks for his powerful sexual needs, yet he married a rather soft and refined woman whom he adores and for whose sake and protection he habitually visited prostitutes.

In 1907 his ambition flagged; he “could not become interested in anything, did not have his mind on his work.” Ostensibly he spent his time on various inventions and patents which caused him sleepless nights, so that he thought he had over-exerted himself. He sought medical advice as early as the spring of that year. During the summer his condition became worse. He was depressed, had hypochondriac thoughts, and spoke anxiously and excitedly of the imminent last judgment. After having tried to cut his wrists he was committed to a hospital. There it soon became clear that he was in the acute phase of a schizophrenic process of a strongly expansive character accompanied by innumerable delusions. He had had one great primary hallucination.

This hallucination, which Neter has described time and again, and always the same way so that we can believe his report, remains at the center of his whole illness. One Monday at noon, in a provincial capital, next to a barracks, an “apparition” appeared in the sky:

At first I saw a white spot in the cloud, very near by – the clouds all stood still – then the white spot withdrew and remained in the sky the whole time, like a board. On this

board or screen or stage pictures followed one another like lightning, maybe 10,000 in half an hour, so that I could absorb the most important only with the greatest attention. The Lord himself appeared, the witch who created the world – in between there were worldly scenes: war pictures, parts of the earth, monuments, battle scenes from the Wars of Liberation, palaces, marvelous palaces, in short the beauties of the whole world – but all of these in supraearthly pictures. They were at least 20 meters high, could be seen clearly, and were almost colorless, like photographs; some were slightly colored. They were living figures which moved. At first I thought that they were not really alive; then they were transcended with ecstasy, the ecstasy was breathed into them. Finally it was like a movie. The meaning became immediately clear on first sight, even if one became conscious of the details only later while drawing them. The whole thing was very exciting and eerie. The pictures were manifestations of the last judgment. Christ could not complete the redemption because the Jews crucified him too soon. Christ said at the Mount of Olives that he had shivered under the pictures which appeared there. These are pictures, in other words, like those of which Christ spoke. They are revealed to me by God for the completion of the redemption.

We shall take up the contents of the apparitions when we discuss Neter's pictures. Here we must deal with his psychosis and the development of his paranoiac system of delusions which he worked out particularly clearly. On his admission to the asylum Neter was perfectly aware of time and place and demonstrated a good fund of knowledge. His arithmetic was weak and his observational powers rather low (*i. e.* his attentiveness was probably disturbed). Most noticeable were his verbose and stubbornly presented complaints about physical sensations. His medical history states that,

It seemed as if a broom were sweeping inside his chest and stomach; his skin had turned into fur; his bones and throat were petrified; in his stomach he had a tree trunk; his blood consisted of water, animals came out of his nose. He sees the devil in the shape of a column of fire perform dances in front of him; when he puts his hand on the table it is as though he touches the wood with the bones; poems about him appear in the newspaper; he is Antichrist, the genuine one; he must live forever, he could not die; he no longer has a heart, his soul was torn out. He explains the cracking of his knees as telephone calls by which the devil down below is always notified of his whereabouts. He claims never to sleep; he has not had a bowel movement since he has been here. He is mostly in a depressed mood because he thinks much about his fate, because of a mortal sin.

It would take us too far afield to quote the forceful letters which he wrote to a prostitute and the mayor of a town out of an overwhelming sorrow for and fury about this "mortal sin," even though the grotesque, almost Pantagruelianly rough but clear prose with which he expresses his wild delusions is unusually fascinating.

The progress of Neter's illness caused little change in his behavior, although his moods vacillated in phases lasting a few months each. Sometimes depressing and hypochondriac ideas predominated. He was then unable to work and was irritated by the physicians and the staff. Sometimes his expansive side would come to the fore in the form of megalomania (he would be a prince, king, emperor, or Christ), and he would show an enterprising spirit and an inclination to work and to make small inventions. But through all the phases the structure of his delusions, whose main characteristics must now be sketched, became increasingly systematic. It is based first of all on the discovery of his true ancestry: with the formal pseudo = logic peculiar to paranoiacs he proves minutely that his grandmother

was an illegitimate child of Napoleon I and Isabella of Parma. Raised as the Countess Wolgschaft in a convent, the grandmother long maintained relations with the local princely house. This idea is possibly grounded in the fact that as a dressmaker she may indeed have maintained such “relations.” All kinds of recollections from his childhood become clear to him as he views them in the light of his discovery. He establishes his rule in his own country, independent of France and Germany, and calls it “Marquise Wolgschaft.” He usually signs himself “Août IV-Napoleon,” at which he arrived by exchanging his surname for, and translating it into, the phonetically similar name of the month. He claims several thrones and drafts appeals to governments and princes, particularly during the war, which is conducted to liberate him from his shameful internment. The appeals are always accompanied by excellent ideas dealing with politics and standards of cultural values, often in the form of witty verses.

While Neter builds his empire on earth his heavenly relationships also continue, even though they may be temporarily relegated to the background. Nevertheless he is compelled now and then to arrange a reconciliation between the two spheres, whether with God himself or with an anonymous world process. To help himself he has invented that grandiose device familiar to us in another form in Strindberg, particularly in *Damascus*, the drama of his late period; and that is the clock of the world running backward. His subjects are to “trust only in the coming world government [*i.e.* his own] since the world clock is running down and going backward, though its hands are always moving forward in order to delude the people about the disorder of the works inside, which only a world university mechanic can understand.” Elsewhere his medical history quotes him as follows: “God also showed me the picture of Napoleon, Christ, and others, which I have copied in part, and the stone tablets of laws of both the future and the past, so that it may be assumed with certainty that Napoleon I was a phenomenon similar to Christ in the world, as god of war, and I his chosen son and redeemer from world to world, from Wolgschaft zu Wolgschaft von Folgschaft [from *folgen*, to follow, Folgschaft = followership or following, here turned into a name].” He also invents fantastic erotic relationships and integrates his delusions with his immediate environment. A whole succession of wives appears in the course of time, and he finally becomes used to recognizing disguised wives in all the women he sees, including the nursing sisters. He treats them with exquisite respect while at the same time speculating about them erotically.

Among Neter’s writings, which are always in a clean pedantic hand, almost as though they were engraved, we find some rollicking poems, with many amusing turns among foolish phonetic associations. He explains the one quoted below as follows: “The piano of section 1 B repaired by me was heavily gnawed by cockroaches and so much dust was in it that it was worth saving as a souvenir, which caused me to turn it over to the housemother as an imperial fief.”

Diese Schachtel mit Verlaub  
Ist gefüllt mit ‘Musikstaub’  
Seiner höchsten Majestät  
Hurrah – prima Qualität  
‘Nahrungsmittelmehlersatz’  
Ist gerade am rechten Platz  
Für das beste Auszugsmehl  
Schlägt ‘Piano’ gar nicht fehl  
Putzt man es nach Jahren aus  
Zieht man einen Nutzen draus  
Was die Schaben nicht gefressen

This carton, with permission  
Is filled with ‘music dust’  
Of his Most High Majesty  
Hurrah – prime quality  
‘Foodstuff-flour-substitute’  
Is exactly the right thing  
For the best extract flour  
‘Piano’ does not sound at all wrong  
If one cleans it up years later  
One gains an advantage  
What the cockroaches did not eat

Dient der Mutter jetzt zum Essen  
Wird sie von dem Mehl nicht dick  
Machts vielleicht doch die Musik  
Ist sie brauchbar reparirt  
Wird bezahlt und dann probiert.

Now serves Mother as food  
If she doesn't get fat from the flour  
The music may do it instead  
If it is repaired and usable  
It's paid for and then tried out.

S. M. Août I.

What first impresses us about this strong, stocky man after 13 years of illness are his rapid, sure movements and his self-confidence. It corresponds with the direct, lively, somewhat flickering and shining look of his bright eyes. He is very polite and open in conversation, speaks rapidly and very emphatically, as if he wanted to meet every possible contradiction at the very outset, and expresses himself smoothly and precisely. Yet we feel from the first moment that he suffers us only conditionally and is not ready to seek an exchange; he looks instead for a willing listener whom he might find easier to convince of his philosophy and mission than the members of his usual circle. He therefore speaks about his technical inventions, which are in fact good, with considerable superficiality, and does not like to discuss his drawing as long we question him only about the sober facts. On the other hand, he breaks out impetuously as soon as we touch on his delusions.

Even today we therefore recognize the capable, kind, but stubborn mechanic described earlier. Neter is temperamental, moody, or rather choleric, and at the same time persistent in the pursuit of his goals which, on the one hand, are practical, like the many small inventions and achievements which are helpful in running the institution, but on the other, are completely abstract and designed only to let him reach the peak of self-esteem. To serve this basic urge he has built all his experiences and knowledge into a system, a world hierarchy, in which he himself represents the highest pinnacle. If we try to understand what normal psychological functions are missing, we find that it is precisely the *fonction du réel*, so important in French psychology and psychiatry, which is not completely translated by our "adaptation to reality," that is suggested here. This much is certain, however: he does not possess the normally compelling tendency to integrate imagination (fantasy) and a "reality" which can be discussed. The real world has no objective character for him but only provides him with material which, in keeping with his urge to self-esteem, he treats arbitrarily. He has turned from the world completely into himself and has become autistic. Schizophrenia allows him the coexistence without conflict of both his conceptual spheres – the delusional in which he is a prince, the emperor- duke of France, redeemer of the world, etc.; and the other, depending on simple cognition, in which he is the mechanic, patient, and citizen. In his case, however, unlike the others, the delusions predominate by far and are organized into his ordered system, while he pays little attention to his civil existence but keeps it completely separate from the system of delusions. He therefore conducts himself normally in his practical activities and has not acquired any strange habits, and the general associative loosening is also much less than in most other cases. Everything he does and thinks betrays a certain discipline, an almost objective logic, in practical matters as well as the delusional system.

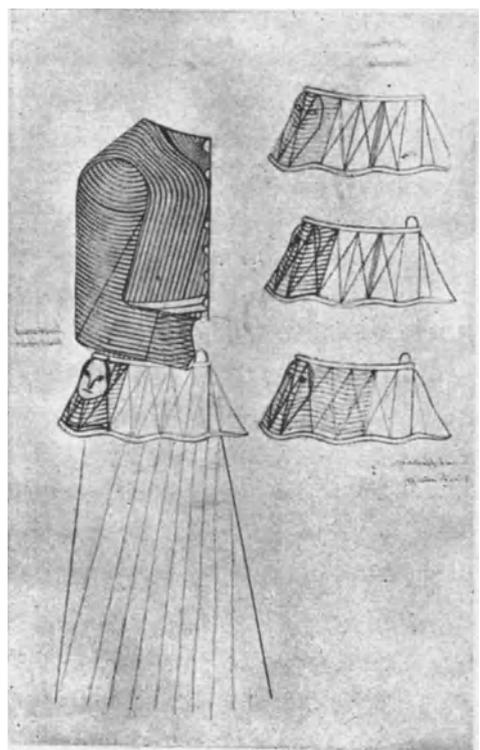
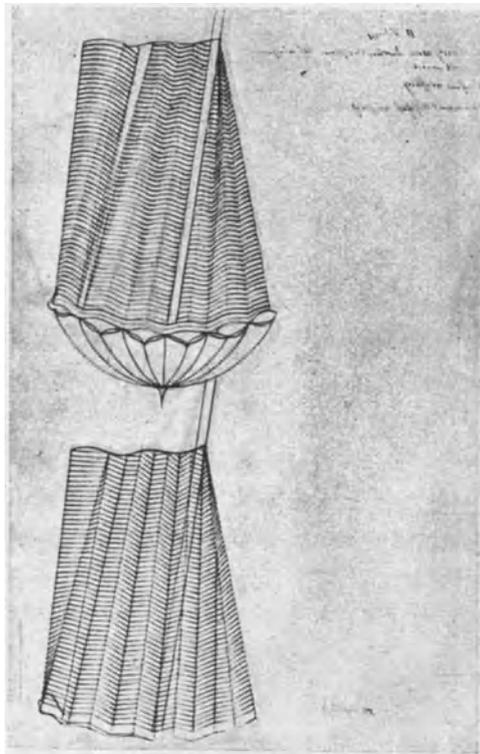
It is impossible to discover, from this description, the role eroticism played in his life. We know few facts, and those are rather rude: he habitually associated with prostitutes while a partner in a very affectionate marriage, and showed the most extreme remorse because of a minor perverted act (only in the psychosis, however). More recently he has given a compulsively strong sexual interpretation to all the words and actions by women in his presence, including nuns. The women are, however, integrated into his delusional system as wives, though he does not draw the practical consequences.

Neter's pictures, to which we now turn, correspond completely in their appearance to the portrait of his personality as we have outlined it. His brush strokes always show a sober, clear objectivity, like those of a technical drawing. It seems that Neter is trying to render facts as precisely as possible. The descriptions Neter finally gave to an intelligent woman patient after long and unrewarding efforts by the physicians confirm our opinion. They correspond with the partial statements which he repeatedly made to the physicians from the very beginning as well as in various parts of his letters. Those statements also always dealt with the reproduction of those 10,000 hallucinatory pictures which have remained with him from the half hour of his great primary schizophrenic experience (see p. 160).

Neter has drawn since 1911, and we can easily distinguish two completely different types of pictures. Those which are most important to us all refer, according to his statements, to the aforementioned hallucinatory experience in which he claims to have seen, outside in the clouds, a vast number of faces. Besides these, however, he has painted a number of watercolors which are meant to be quite soberly realistic and whose detail was done with extreme patience and pedantry. Only the detail distinguishes them from the usual attempts by amateurs, and only a floral still life stands out by its tasteful unity, despite its colorfulness.

When Neter now asserts that he is drawing hallucinations which he had had perhaps six years earlier, we must entertain some doubts about the reliability of the drawings as objective documents. Psychologically, what does he really reproduce when he tries to commit to paper these pictures seen six years earlier? We do not wish to raise the common, usually over-emphasized objection, that he will have forgotten much of what he then saw. We always find that schizophrenics have extraordinarily good memories for experiences which are important to them, as unimportant as they may appear to others. Much more crucial for paranoiacs is the opposite objection: what may not have been added over the years to a memory complex of such tremendous force as the primary schizophrenic experience, especially since Neter emphasized repeatedly how briefly the individual figures ("more than 10,000 in half an hour") became visible. Secondly, what may a schizophrenic, with his urge to integrate every fleeting idea into his main conceptions, not include in his pictures in the way of playfully established associative material? Since we have no authority which can answer such questions satisfactorily, we have to restrict ourselves to establishing protective rules. We shall therefore accept as the most secure basis the descriptions Neter provided before producing his pictures and, furthermore, we shall accept as proof of the authenticity of his visions only those statements which he made consistently over a period of time. Our caution is all the more necessary because two of the drawings to be discussed first are, as far as we can establish, the only ones known so far in which a patient claims to depict hallucinations exactly and which he also describes verbally. They achieve a powerful effect by their uniquely fantastic combinations of representational form elements.

We recall that Neter's visions appeared in the sky as if on a board, a screen, or a stage "A part was always washed off and something else drawn in, as if by a fast draftsman who wanted to draw very rapidly." He identifies the "Skirt Transformations" of which four are reproduced in Figure 119, as the first group. We have to assume, especially in their case, that the detailed description which Neter made for the series in 1919 contained many subsequent, fleeting ideas, and we therefore cite only a few. The skirt originated in several phases, at first in the form of organ pipes, then as musical instruments, as tablets of law piled up like bricks, as rock, and as a stone pulpit. The



Case 18

**Fig. 119.** "Skirt Transformations" (Pencil).

10 × 16 cm.



Case 18 **Fig. 120.** "Witch with Eagle" (Pencil). 20 × 25 cm.

piece in the center looked like an inverted basket; a face appeared on it, the dawn of the gods which changed into a devil's mask, into Moses, Christ, Napoleon I, and finally into the patient himself, specifically as a child. A figure eight lying on its side formed at the bottom of the skirt, then a snake, and finally a seashell like an umbrella. Furthermore, an "N" and an "A" as well as other wonderful inscriptions could be seen in the folds of the skirt, among them "man-woman", which Neter claimed sounded the same whether read forward or backward, and Neter's various titles.

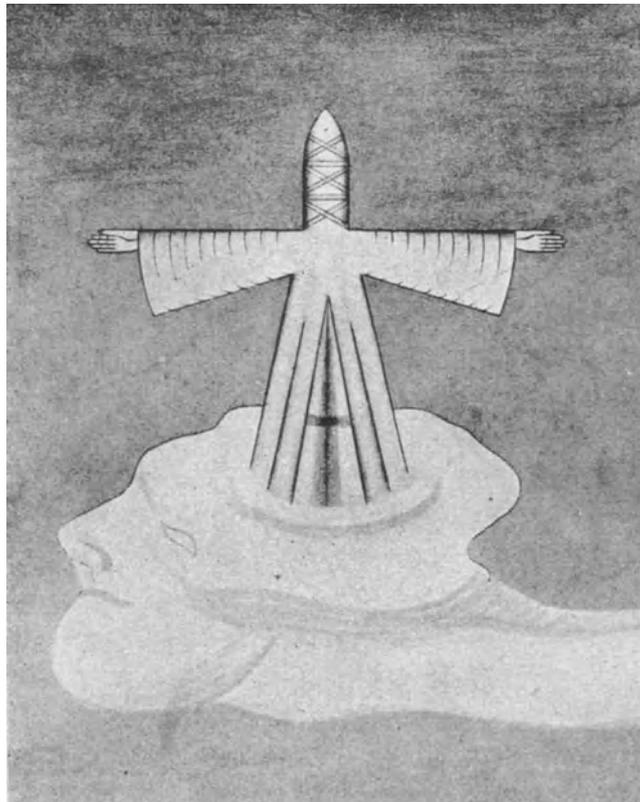
The final piece in this group is Figure 120. We quote here some excerpts from Neter's explanations of it:

The face appeared to me as a skull, but had life just the same . . . the joints of the skull formed a nightcap – a ruche appeared on the nightcap, made up of question marks, and these were changed into feathers – the eye looked like a glass eye, it sparkled; it was loose in the socket . . . Various changes also took place at the neck, in particular a place was symbolized there, the location of a mysterious place . . . The whole figure is a witch: it symbolizes the creation of the world as witchcraft . . . The two animals: eagle and crocodile are the witch's messengers – they are always prepared and ready at the beck and call of

the witch, always ready to jump . . . The eagle was changed into all kinds of figures. The feathers were separated by black and white lines. On the eagle were all kinds of apparitions: two palaces, the locked palaces of hell, in any case . . . Then a cellar with two entrances, the gates of hell . . . Once there was on it a beautiful skiff, this skiff had a feather as a sail; then a storm came and the skiff was upset, but it did not come to any harm . . . One can compare the skiff with the small boat in which the disciples of Jesus were and from which they fished, and from which St. Peter called the Lord . . . A heart has formed on the neck of the eagle, and the eagle flew into the sky with the heart. The heart had been stabbed through, a sign that it had to suffer – and I was stuck inside! On the skiff was a 4rer [*i.e. vierer, Führer, leader*]: lead, I am to lead, – leading ship in the world! The whole picture of the witch was like plaster of Paris for a while – and then it appeared in a glass case and looked like rock – and finally it was given a setting and – it was gone! And then came rain [funnel, upper right] as if from a watering can and poured on the crocodile – and that's how the crocodile got its shading.

We also have detailed explanations for Figure 121, “The Antichrist,” also called “The Prophet,” “The Canonical Papal Rock,” “St. Thomas,” or “The Spirit of God in the Clouds.” One of these explanations, dated 1917, which he wrote after having copied the figure once again in wood with a jig saw and having colored it, follows:

St. Thomas is the spirit of God in the form of a false prophet forecast the redeemer standing in a cloud the last judgment hanging over sinful mankind at the beginning of Nov. 1907. I have given this unknown spirit the name Thomas, spirit of unbelief, because his figure



Case 18      **Fig. 121.** “Antichrist” (Pencil).      20 × 26 cm.

resembles a T, which is composed of three (,) commas, the head is formed of a 42-cm. cannon shell which transforms itself into a papal tiara and finally into a splendid pile of straw. When the large cross has appeared in the sky I shall gather everything to myself. The same was about three meters high and was formed when the spirit stuck his naked arms out horizontally through the shirt sleeves and, by rapid rocking of them, produced the form of the cross. That the prophet was false (angry), is thereby enlightened, that he announced the prophesied last judgment (from which he will come, to judge the living and the dead) by his appearance, which means a false profit for unbelieving humanity whose consequences it soon got to feel when it had to accept the truth, after it had declared the redeemer mentally ill, because of unbelief, in that it claimed about the apparitions of the revelation of God that there was no such thing and put the redeemer Napoleon into a madhouse, to be cured. But this spirit is of unusual importance and of infinite value in his return, that not every unbeliever be lost through him or end up in the madhouse because he has seen him and yet not believed. But if the doctors have not believed but have assigned this and other apparitions to the realm of fable, these same will be able to mirror themselves in this wooden spirit picture and let their ignorance shine, in that they pay tuition for the enlightenment, to enrich their knowledge through word and picture, only then are they real doctors who can allow themselves to be seen for their money (on Potsdam's fair grounds).

When I reported to My brother-in-law and My brother of the apparition of the revelation of God (to which belong also the Holy Mary or the devil's grandmother with her household pets, the eagle 'Phoenix' and the crocodile, which were also represented by Me in the picture), I was simply declared insane and brought to the madhouse for the observation of my mental condition, which was then stretched out a bit long, while I demanded no observation since after all I knew best what I was about, especially since God had revealed to Me also My condition of rank as Emperor of France and Germany. At the end of the performance God gave Me a direction to the question about which I was thinking: 'King of Wurttemberg, don't go to Wurttemberg.' Building on that I wanted to go to King 'Wilhelm' for the purpose of an explanation, of which My brother didn't want to know and then speeded up My admission to an asylum, which was unpleasant to Me but a consolation just the same because I told Myself, God will direct My fate after his revelation that I can go out as King even in the madhouse, as his Son, since power knows no limits and pursues the rascals at their heels, in case they don't want to release Me any more because of My high rank as Napoleon. The whole row of My wives was also revealed to Me as living figures, so that I recognized the same in part, as far as I still had their pictures in My memory, even though I did not know what role this whole lot of ladies played, about which I became clear only later, especially since finally nurses appeared in nuns' habits. But this question can be considered solved and cleared up that just these nurses married the divine redeemer as promised brides of the Savior, after he personally appeared among them and they could do nothing better than to be freed by him from need, oppression, religious darkness, and stupidity under the yoke of serfdom.

Written for the greater honor of God and his dear mother in R., and depicted by 'H. Majesty' Aouit I – IV Napoleon.

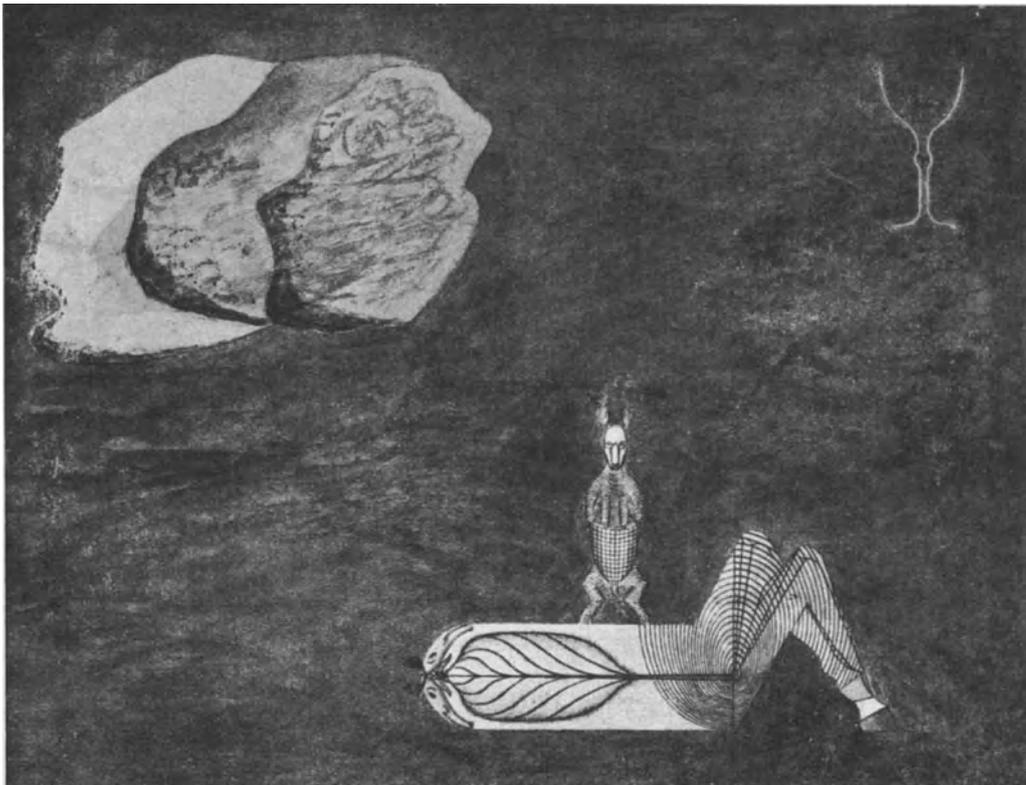
A second description, dated 1919, shows how Neter apparently enlarges on his ideas:

In this picture there first appears a pipe bowl, from a pipe which is in the possession of my brother and comes from Napoleon I. The pipe stem depicts a hiker with a back pack. The hiker sits on a tree stump and carries in his pack a very small telescope and – a naked woman. Then smoke came out of the pipe bowl, that is to say when the canonical pope appears or the antichrist, then it smokes... And then a human figure in a shirt stood up on the smoke which looked like clouds. The figure had the shape of a cross. The letter A formed out of the folds of the robe. The arms moved, instead of the head there was a cannon shell – and the shell became a tiara – and finally a pile of straw, *i. e.* the shell can go up in flames like straw: the transitoriness of the world!

For “The World Axis and Rabbit,” Figure 122, a description dated 1919 exists whose major points Neter repeated in 1920:

There was a cloud pulled down and the world axis was standing there. Then it became a board – and this board became a tree with seven branches: The seven-tiered candelabrum. Feet were attached to the tree: billy goats’ feet and these were changed to horses’ feet – the devil... My family tree appeared on this tree. The tree was protected by the hands of God (stand the picture upright – above the tree), they were very tender beautiful ladies’ hands. The rings form the growth rings . . . Now the tree was not universally admired and the pigs climbed all over the tree – and put themselves above God – and showed God disrespect (two boars’ heads above the tender hands). The whole was like a living animal, a rodent! Now the tree grew leaves – and the leaves were changed to gold. The tree was turned like a roller in the storm. In place of the tree came the head of Jupiter, the god of war.

Neter claimed that the whole picture had predicted the World War – he had known everything in advance, even the end of the war. Anyway, many of the changes he had seen had not yet come about; they would all come; then he would finally know what it all meant. “A rabbit suddenly jumped from a cloud and with one leap it was on the roller.” The rabbit represented “the uncertainty of good fortune. It began to run on the roller – and the roller began to turn, *i. e.* the thing turns about the family tree . . . The rabbit was then changed into a zebra (upper part striped) and then into a donkey (donkey’s



Case 18

**Fig. 122.** “World Axis and Rabbit” (Pencil).

25 × 20 cm.

head) made of glass. A napkin was hung on the donkey; it was shaved. During the whole time of these apparitions there was a chalice on the side," *i. e.* Neter's chalice of suffering!

He once claimed that the "Miracle Shepherd," Figure 123, originated from the tree trunk with a head, but at other times he held to this description, given in 1919: "At first a cobra was in the air, iridescent green and blue. And then came the foot (along the snake). Then the other foot came. It was made from a turnip." In answer to a question he said:



Case 18

**Fig. 123.** "Miracle Shepherd" (Pencil).

20 × 26 cm.

The fable of Rubezahl: Reue Bezahl! [pay for repentance] – On this second foot appeared the face of my father-in-law in W.: the world miracle. The forehead was creased – and the seasons of the year came from it. Then it became a tree. The bark of the tree was broken off in front so that the gap formed the mouth of the face. The branches of the tree formed the hair. Then there appeared feminine genitals between the leg and the foot, those break off the man's foot, *i. e.* sin comes from the woman and makes the man fall. One foot is propped against the sky, that means the fall into hell.

The toes on this foot are musical notes, but Neter does not know why. “Then came a Jew, a shepherd who had a sheepskin wrapped around him. There was wool on him, those were a lot of W's, *i. e.* much woe will come. These W's were changed into wolves, these wolves were dangerous wolves. And these wolves were changed into sheep: they were the sheep in wolves' clothing. And the sheep then ran round the shepherd. I am the shepherd – the Good Shepherd – God!” He says all this very ceremoniously. “The wolves are the Germans, my enemies.” These pictures were intended for him alone; others might have seen them too but “it would have meant their death.” God spoke to him directly through these apparitions. A great deal can only come to pass in the future.

The uniqueness of Neter's drawings made it necessary to quote his explanations at length, because for once the contents of the pictures are much more important than their forms. To anticipate: the sober, precise lines, frequently drawn in concentric circles (apparently with a compass), and often drawn with a ruler, suggest the technical drawings of an electrician. Lines of force of magnetic or electric fields also assume the same shapes. This kind of line corresponds to his pedantically neat and clear handwriting. We found a similar neatness in the pedantic logic with which he expanded his system of delusions. Whereas in “The Transformation” and “The Witch” more or less realistic motifs, which as such are common property, are stylistically unified by his drawing method and furthermore overloaded with symbolism, the last three drawings stand out by themselves. They do not represent known objects which are secondarily bearers of symbolism; instead, they are realistically senseless and base their right to exist purely on schizophrenic experience, not on a “reality” accessible to other persons as well. “The Antichrist,” Figure 121, must still be considered by itself as a rather different phenomenon of configuration because in its basic form it is not far removed from the familiar, yet it owes its surprisingly monumental impact to its ruthless and audacious abstraction, in which the outlines are drawn with a ruler. Another version of the same motif, which lacks the lines issuing from the back, almost makes an even stronger impact. One might argue how far the hallucinatory experience can be held responsible for the grandiose impression made by the figure of the prophet when we can clearly demonstrate the sober methods used to draw it. We only point out that nobody has been able to escape its peculiar effect and that we know of nothing comparable – unless it is the natural impression of a cross seen against the sky in high mountains.

Aside from a possible hallucinatory origin the last two most peculiar pictures can only have a playful origin, like those by Klotz (p. 131). But a comparison with Klotz's pictures teaches us rather forcefully that we are facing something different here; the quality of strangeness and the supernatural which agitates and fascinates us so inexplicably is almost totally absent in Klotz. Comparable pieces would more likely be done by the woodcarver Brendel. Unless we are mistaken, the characteristic quality lies in the organic forms resulting from the partial drawings of organs, which however are not centered

anywhere. The fake organisms are neatly drawn to completion and closed on all sides, but once again with the pointless logic which leads a rational man into an endless maze. The schizophrenic is privileged to move at ease because he can at any moment switch his guiding thought, and he has a double orientation to every object. Perhaps in no other picture do we confront the specifically schizophrenic emotion as helplessly, because we are not faced with a representation to which we can simply assent aesthetically without asking about meaning. Here schizophrenic experiences are illustrated quite nakedly, and any additions are in no way adapted to rational conceptual methods. Both means, therefore, which offered us the possibility of entering into schizophrenic conceptual complexes are blocked, the rational as well as the aesthetic. The former led us to the border beyond which the alien world begins. The latter, the aesthetic, delivered up to our view a configuration including its schizophrenic components, and we were then able to exclude the alienating elements during our immediate experience.

## 5. Johann Knüpfer

Johann Knüpfer was born in 1866 in a village in the Oden forest, the youngest of four brothers. A sister of his father is said to have had religious delusions, otherwise we know of no illness in the family. His father died young after having been separated from his mother for some time. Knüpfer was an average pupil, was apprenticed as a baker for two and a half years, and then went abroad. He was excused from military service because of a rupture. Between the ages of 20 and 30 he worked in a large city, apparently regularly, even though he changed industries twice. Having worked in a large bakery he spent two and a half years in a cement factory and then six and a half years in a machine shop, where he learned locksmithing.

According to his own statements, he and one of his brothers lived with his mother. He seems to have been a quiet, solid person without any special inclinations, though rather shy, if his own description is accurate. After the death of his mother in 1906 Knüpfer's steady, industrious way of life changed. Persuaded by acquaintances, he married quite against his will, as he later declared. Unfortunately no details are available about the years of change except for his own expansive autobiography written during his stay in the asylum. We know that after his marriage he often changed jobs, often quit, and occasionally drank too much. Both partners said that the marriage was bad from the very beginning. Knüpfer early formed a distrust toward his wife and others, in which a distinct paranoia became ever more apparent. What part observations played in it is no longer clear. His habits became less and less regular, he worked little and stayed away from home; when he did go home he would beat his wife. In 1902 he was still drifting, was sentenced seven times for begging, and was finally committed to the asylum in a completely neglected state after having become desperate enough "because of terrific chicanery, of torment," to stab himself in the chest with his pocket knife. But "death is something different, it does not make the same progress as the spirit," he said soon after his admission.

It became evident that Knüpfer had been subject to delusions for years and that his attitude to the world was completely determined by them. He believed himself persecuted by numerous persons and had made all sorts of observations which confirmed his paranoia. Upon drinking some brandy his wife had given him he became ill – therefore, he concluded, it must have been poisoned. He also clearly noticed poison in the water. Smoke was blown into his room from the store, like chloroform. He overheard someone say, "he must be murdered, he is too rich." He was shot at with fiery arrows. In short, he had to suffer like Christ the Savior, who often became clearly visible to Knüpfer. Christ spoke through his poets and through messages and inspirations. He explained many things to Knüpfer, including the actions of his persecutors. To escape from them and the tortures, he traveled from place to place, but wherever he went the "thing" was also.

Knüpfer expressed his experiences in strong words, such as "terrible tortures" and

“it was the chalice of suffering,” but in an unemotional, mannered monotone (with emphases on the final sounds and last syllables) which often took on a ceremonious tone. At the same time he favored affected or pastoral expressions, as in his detailed autobiography written in 1903, of which we quote some extracts:

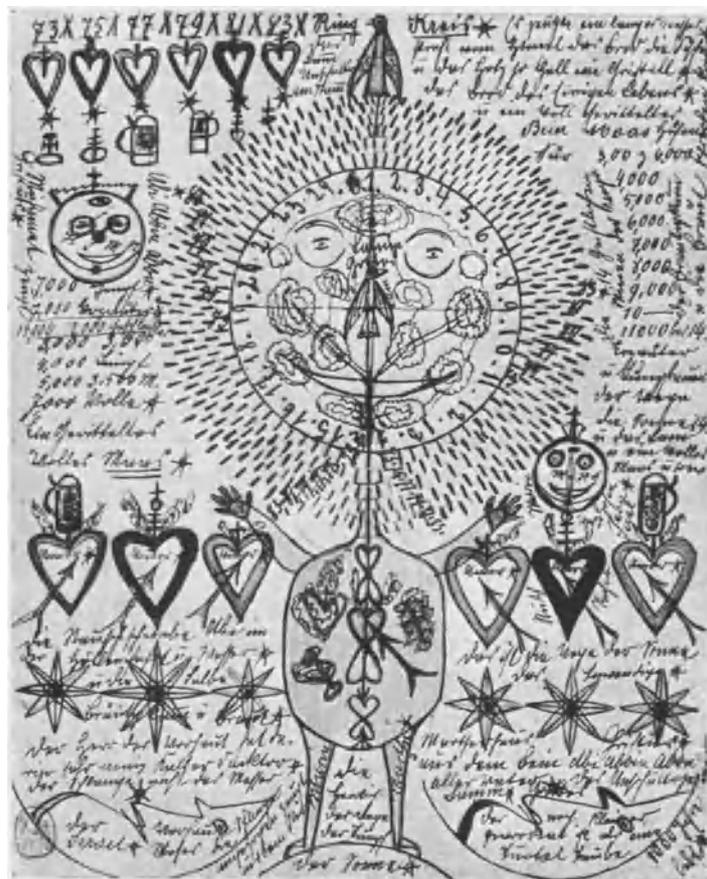
Your our respected Prince His Royal Highness Most High Orders Your most humble please Your Grace and Would most respectfully give me support, I was always from childhood until today at the age of 37 years 6 mo. Your Grace and Eminence for princes and fatherland, for Emperor and Empire, and all high eminence, in the country and in all the earth, might beg Your Highness to describe my life, from youth to the end, was born in V. in 18 March 1866 Office W., and have always dealt correctly with high and all people politely in every respect, and went to the primary school until 14 years of age and then I entered into apprenticeship and learned baking in Heilig+steinach and was brought up Rightthinking, have not stolen and have otherwise during my life dealt rightly and the father died young . . . Something I would not believe to what limits such people go that is something usual for them but the just people they already earlier that I was married already told, the woman which they brought on me, these just people do not speak the truth, these say we say to our hay straw and to our straw hay, and, well, when that all goes on I don't know what I should say, to bring people from innocence into bad fortune. I, J. have at all times spoken nothing bad just like today . . . but my wife wanted that I be jailed but she did not want to be divorced but carry out her crime with me, then the people in the house have already instructed her well how to do it, but Mr. J. had said he wanted to throw me head over tail down over the railing and bury me alive in his cellar but that the people in the neighborhood heard written so loud I should have led the court into the back of his house . . .

Knüpfer's religious megalomania, long hidden, emerged in the asylum. He informed a physician secretly that he had already been called during his youth. Nobody on earth could have achieved while alive what he had achieved, no one had suffered as much, not even Christ. Meanwhile he pleaded that the martyrdom be discontinued, and said that he would rather be put to death immediately. His medical history did not change a great deal in the ensuing period. Knüpfer remains a difficult patient who occasionally goes to work, but who is usually so enveloped in his delusions that he is irritated by any challenge from the outside. His love for animals is noteworthy. He observes things very carefully but connects everything he sees with his delusions. He claims to understand the voices of birds fully.

The progress of his illness is typical: it is a quiet schizophrenia in which no acute phase can be clearly discerned. Accordingly the magnificent visions which break in on other patients are apparently lacking in Knüpfer's experiences, and his schizophrenic outlook rests instead on innumerable small delusional experiences and interpretations which slowly coalesce, without, however, becoming systematic. His religious imagination is central. His presentiments, his hallucinatory apparitions, his sufferings, his reflections about himself and his relation to the world — all flow together and become clear to him in the dominant idea that, although as a divinely called person he would have to suffer incredibly, he would therefore also have to play a role like Christ's in the world. With such thoughts — and even more the corresponding emotions, especially those having to do with feelings of self-esteem and worth — Knüpfer rationalizes away the fact that he is compelled to stay in the asylum, not a matter of indifference even to a schizophrenic, as well as his wrecked life. In short, Knüpfer appears to us a quiet and somewhat introspective man without special talents. We might consider him sensitive. That would be born

out by the fact that the turn toward illness occurred after the death of his mother. His loving preoccupation with family recollections, which we shall discuss directly, also speaks for it.

Knüpfer began to draw soon after his admission to the asylum, keeping his motifs closely related to what he expressed tirelessly verbally and in writing. We could therefore see the urge to communicate as the decisive stimulus for his drawing, but it would not tell us anything about how he draws. In looking at some of the drawings he made with ink pencil, ink, and crayons, of which Figure 124 is a typical example, we note immediately that his work is very formal. The quite strict symmetrical arrangement lends "The Lamb of God" a certain solemn dignity. The large circle with the wreath of rays is intended to be a monstrance, as we know from other drawings, to which the tiny body is a handle. At the same time the circle is the face of a clock, the sun, and the face of the little man who according to the inscription represents the lamb of God, *i. e.* Christ, with whom Knüpfer usually identifies himself, so that we have to assume at least five or six meanings. A mouth and eyes are recognizably parts of the face, and a heraldic bird replaces the nose. The main heart with the arrow apparently exerted such a suggestive effect on Knüpfer that it would not let him go. Three pairs of hearts appear out of the one heart, one on top of the next; in addition there are three more on each side of the body which have peculiar decorations, and in the upper left corner there are another half dozen. We have here a convincing example of the perseverance of a form which time and again



Case 90

Fig. 124. "Lamb of God" (Ink).

16 × 21 cm.



Case 90 **Fig. 125.** "Bumperton" (Ink). 16 × 21 cm.

asserts itself in all parts of the drawing. Among the numerals which are distributed over the sheet the row of the odd numbers 73 to 83 seems to have a secret meaning, appearing no fewer than five times. The inscriptions too are primarily oracular. "That is the Vega of the sun the inturnd out of the leg, Abi Abbia Abba – Muhamet begets Christ . . .," or he names the legs Maria and Marta, etc. Just as monstrance, manikin, sun, clock, and Christ are here consolidated into the one "ring circle," so are a bassoon and a human figure integrated in "The Great Bumperton on the Sabbath," Figure 125.

These drawings, whose pathos has been absorbed by their formal ceremoniousness, and whose playful element appears in the colorful mixture of oracular sentences, are dominated by Knüpfer's religious delusions. On the other hand, we find a large group of pictures which grew out of an entirely different state of mind, his recollections of the home of his youth. We have already said that Knüpfer was unusually attached to his mother and after her death became very unstable. Later, when his own life was ruined, he retreated more and more into family memories. His frequent writings in the last few years deal almost exclusively with the lands of his relatives, among whom his maternal grandfather plays the major role as the prosperous owner of a large farm. Knüpfer's drawings of houses, usually outlined on a large scale in pencil and crudely "painted" with red, blue, and green crayons, contain numerous details which are always carefully named or even described in adjacent captions so that text and drawing would balance each other if the colors did not give the latter the dominance. The text is not restricted

to objective statements, however, but is overgrown with bombastic aphorisms: “Tramping stairs ascent of the resurrected – 12 families red stair stones – the secret rear court behind the horses’ stalls – the Lord let fire rain down cruelly like Sodom and Gomorrah – the 3–5 shepherd’s cabin at grandfather R., now I already have of the magnificence of the sun god and the sun goddess of 1866; 68; 69; etc . . .”

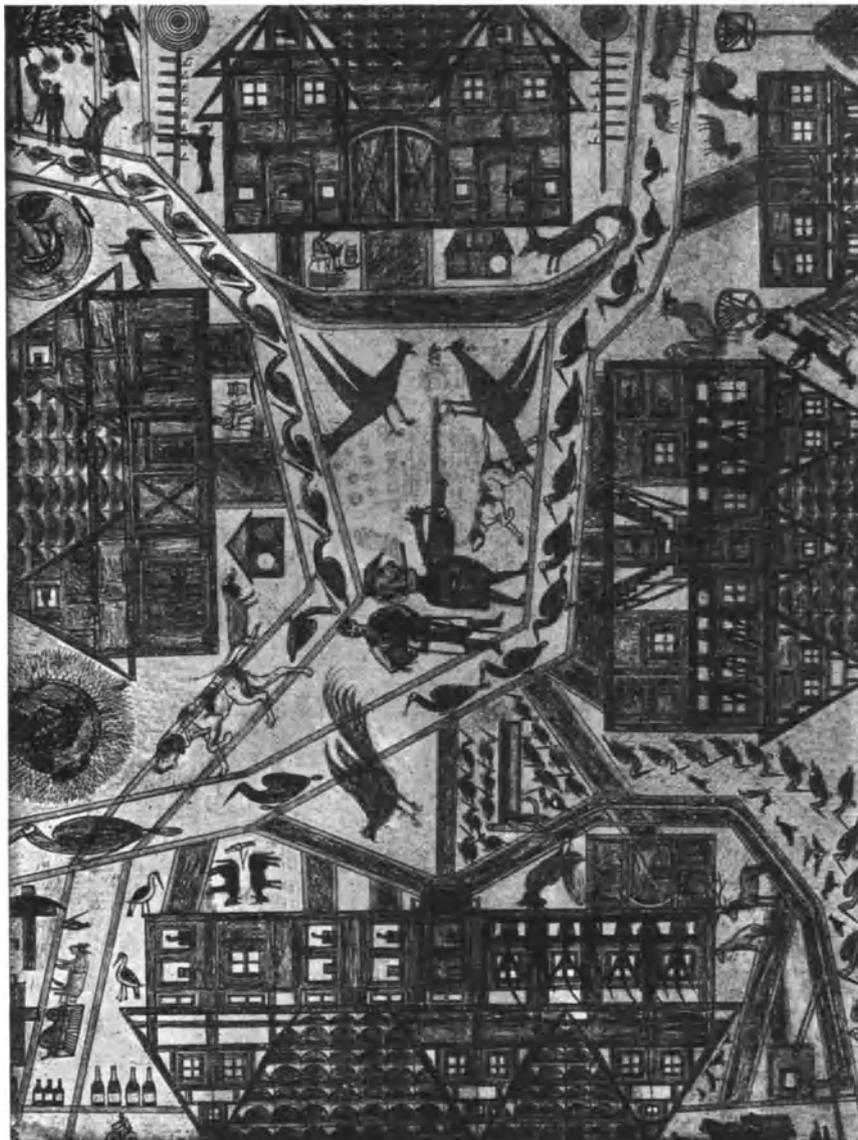
These drawings show the configurative process especially clearly. As its psychic basis we recognize Knüpfer’s tendency to bring to mind familiar things from his youth. His recollections have a ceremonious, religious coloration because of his delusions, and they are embellished with Bible quotations. As for the visual, we find only partial concepts, like “stable,” “well,” “pear tree,” “doghouse,” etc., which have a certain vitality but never become a cohesive and complete picture. On the other hand, the physical layout of the farm buildings had a topographical aftereffect on Knüpfer. He remembers the arrangements of the farms and takes imaginary walks on them. His drawing paper soon becomes such a farm for him and, by showing houses and stables on it, he proceeds to wander on the sheet as on his imaginary farm, except that instead of turning around for a look he rotates the paper. Nothing can better prove our interpretation than the rows of nearly unidentifiable birds on the paths in Figure 126. Their positions neither correspond to the buildings behind them, nor are they uniform throughout the picture. Instead, they also simply materialized as the drawer went for a walk on his layout, that is to say, turned the paper and simultaneously produced one bird after another without giving any thought to the houses.

Knüpfer’s tendency toward formal strictness in the division of the surface, which we mentioned earlier, also receives its due, however. We do not know the real farms were arranged. The fact that he does not apply a single pattern but draws quite a few different outlines suggests a certain faithfulness to reality, but soon his formal tendencies take effect. Wherever possible he establishes symmetrical axes, for the whole drawing as well as individual houses. That both ends of all houses are visible as if their walls were folded out must be attributed as much to Knüpfer’s desire for symmetry between the halves as to his desire for completeness. Indeed, children and untrained adults, who always draw houses similar to Knüpfer’s, normally show only one end of a house, especially if it has a small addition on the other end. In any case Knüpfer’s “ideoplastic” striving for completeness is limited, else he would also have to show the backs. What seems more important is that, because a roof is by its nature gabled, its gable imposes itself on his conception even when he shows a roof from the side. Whether he attaches one gable or two is probably decided partly by formal tendencies. His house pictures give us the impression that the buildings are folded out in accordance with the pictorial methods of primitives, early cultures, children, and untrained adults, for whom the tendency to formal abstraction is always characteristic. Often Knüpfer even draws circular windows and doghouse doors, which surely are uncommon in the country. When a feature, for instance a window, is repeated many times, each example is drawn with pedantic accuracy. The sun and the moon often appear in the corners. Even more frequent are birds like those in Figure 127.

We come now to Knüpfer’s real achievement and to an intimate acquaintance with him. Everything we have discussed so far could be demonstrated independently of his personality without causing us to miss any essential trait, but the execution of the bird motif must arouse in us an interest in him as a person. The large farm picture is alive with animals, predominantly ducklike – though long beaked – ones. (The nicely outlined guard dog is traced.) The ducks and other creatures are quite childish. Different from them in every way are the birds which are so stylized as to become heraldic. One type, upright, with symmetrically hanging wings, as in Figure 124, seems most likely inspired

by pigeons. It is hard to find models for the birds in Figure 127, but that is unimportant because the significance of this type with its steeply inclined, narrow wings lies entirely in the emotional tone produced not only by every individual bird, but especially by the strangely fascinating arrangements of Figures 127 and 128.

Knüpfer has succeeded beautifully in the seven suspended birds, one of the few pictures without inscriptions and the only one remaining almost free of extraneous additions. The daggers and rifles apparently refer to a magic bullet spell whose formulas he often writes down and which indicates that we are dealing with magic forces. Indeed, the rigid shadow birds convey a feeling of the supernatural even on sober inspection. What causes it? Surely some slight disquiet is caused the observer by the distribution of the animals on the sheet, hovering, as they do, between order and arbitrariness: the middle bird is not suspended in the center, and while the ones around the outside are arranged in pairs, the two larger



Case 90

**Fig. 126.** Farm (Pencil and crayon).

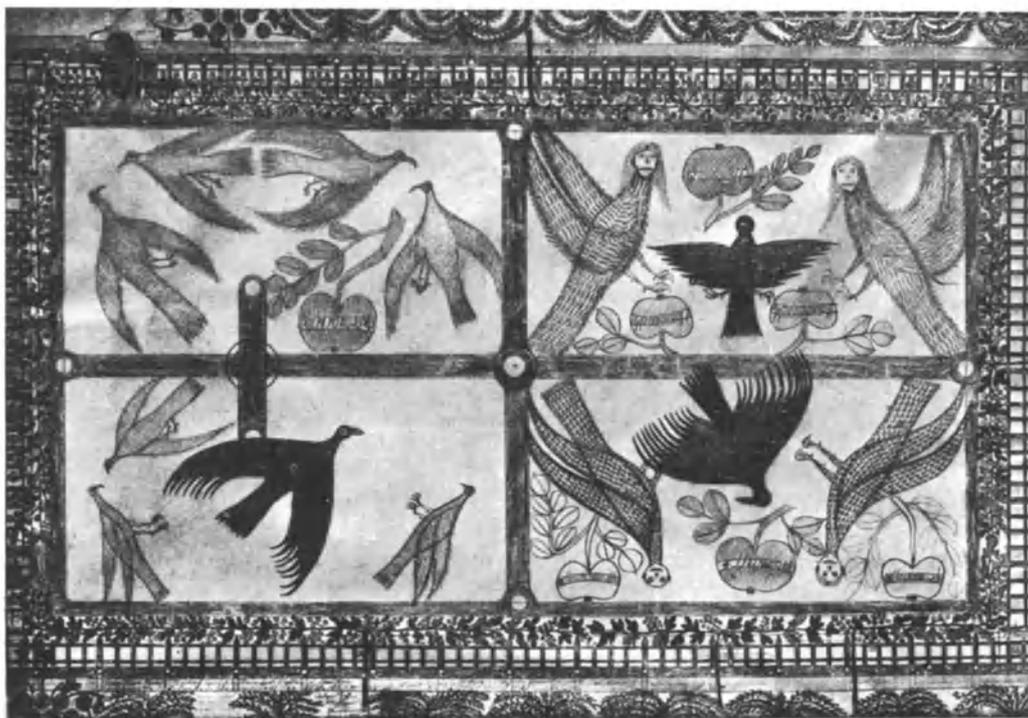
95 × 70 cm.



Case 90

**Fig. 127.**  
Birds (Pencil).

ca. 32 × 42 cm.



Case 90

**Fig. 128.** Decorative Drawing with Birds (Chalk and crayon).

102 × 72 cm.

pairs, those at the top and bottom, though lined up evenly, are so positioned that the two birds on the left touch tails whereas the ones on the right leave room enough for another smaller pair which has pushed its way in. Surely the drawer was not conscious of these most important recognizable features, and the fascination of the picture lies just in the fact that he was forced into such unresolved tensions in his composition that we cannot avoid recognizing in them a reflection of his schizophrenia.

The large picture with the white and black birds, Figure 128, combines the major motifs of Figures 126 and 127 into a richly intertwined decorative whole in which the rigid division of cruciform bands and the pedantic garden fence seem rather lame, while the birds themselves are much more alive and free than in the other pictures. The black ones are apparently modeled on crows. Among the white birds we are surprised to recognize genuine harpies, which could hardly have been known to Knüpfer from Greek mythology. Although the picture makes a predominantly decorative impression we must assume that the drawer himself probably acted on affectively colored recollections. Most likely he had in mind a garden at home, with the pigeons and crows which he may often have observed as a boy, and the good fruit trees and the cider which was pressed each year. The inscription put on the few apples shown, which are surely meant to represent all the varieties of fruit, says as much: "cider stuff." It is simultaneously a typically schizophrenic concept which can perhaps be explained by analogous verbal combinations. "Textile stuff" would be the closest, commonly used parallel, or, more exactly, "woolen suit stuff," which would be a similarly confused term, instead of "wool." Or "cider stuff" is simply a contraction of a value judgment into one term: the apples are valued as the stuff or raw material for the cider.

## 6. Viktor Orth

Viktor Orth, born in 1853 into a presumably healthy, ancient, noble family, developed normally as a child. His abilities were average, but he was always very ambitious, as well as mistrustful, withdrawn, and irritable. When he was a naval cadet he once fell to the deck from a yardarm and as a naval officer he was hit on the head with a rifle butt during the Russo-Turkish war; otherwise he is supposed to have been healthy. Most of his service was on a training ship on which he traveled to the West Indies, among other places. Occasionally he drank heavily and lived irregularly. As early as 1878 he was plagued by paranoia, especially against his relatives. Two years later he fled his ship, shot himself in the side on a train and, having been pensioned as mentally ill, was committed to an asylum. A short time later the family tried to take care of him again, but from 1883 until his death in 1919 he was continuously hospitalized.

His paranoia primarily took the form of a fear of being poisoned and coincided with states of strong excitement. Soon he was firmly convinced that he was a different person. He finally renounced his family and since then has considered himself the son of a prince, the Duke of Luxemburg, and King of Poland, and has become arrogant and condescending. In 1883 he was already badly confused, emotionally inaccessible, and completely autistic. He hallucinated much, conversed with the pope and the emperor, gave orders and sometimes murmured "I am the king of Saxony, commander of all European troops; I am Piast; the whole family is damned – I am no Freemason, sum-sum-sum-sum-eli-eli-Enoch-Amen." He believed that he was served human flesh and pounded the door with the "hammer strokes of eternity," called the hospital director "Mon Prince" and a second physician "Prince Piast," and wanted them to address him by the familiar "du," while roughly showing the assistant physician the door. He was frequently excited. At that time he showed no inclination to paint.

About 1900 Orth became the archetype of a person in the imbecilic final stage – apathetic, unclean, and very confused. He dresses and undresses himself and winds his watch, but the staff has to push him hard to perform all his other tasks, including even eating. He answers some questions rationally in a low voice, but in turn often asks completely absurd questions with great courtesy. In this state he has now begun to paint with unlimited eagerness. No empty surface is safe. Animals, landscapes, above all marine scenes appear rapidly on paper, wood, and on walls. When he lacks paints he squeezes green leaves and uses the juices, or he draws with a brick on the garden wall. His explanations of his pictures are as foolish as everything else he utters. A bird, for example, means "it can become grateful again," a landscape "three dragon mountains for the stomach" or "the 7 Rumanianless." He explains his collection of various objects similarly. A piece of cardboard is armor for warships, a branch is artillery, and two figurines are alpinists who go to Italy and die there. A brick with which he draws has "fallen from a planet that is larger than the earth, and its name ist Amor and not Becker of Sardinia." He



29 x 21 cm.

**Fig. 129.** Three-master at Sea in the Evening (Water color).

feels pain in the “Netherlandish goldammer nerves.” He remains a childish, kind, and confused old man who mostly lies around on the floor, no longer answers rationally, plays with buttons and pebbles, and has no desires other than being allowed to paint on everything.

Orth has produced four kinds of pictures: seascapes, figures, “catatonic drawings,” and “ghosts.” The marine scenes are, of course, drawn from memory. He repeatedly draws a dignified three-master, apparently his training ship, in constantly changing surroundings, sometimes only as a barely outlined pictogram, sometimes with filled, yellow-brown sails in watercolors. In the latter drawings, which almost have the realistic sham elegance of the works of W. Stöwer, Orth divides the water from the sky and, in short, approaches a normal sketch. More frequently, however, his recollections are only the raw material for pictures constructed according to his own rules. Accordingly the area of Figure 129 is broken up into several diagonally opposed blue, red, and gray sections which together give the effect of a mild sunset at sea. In the center there is once again the repressed, distorted, and stylized three-master. The word “skill” is inappropriate, but what about “desire”? Many notations in Orth’s medical history would speak for its presence, rather as if he had talked himself into an artist’s attitude with phrases like “tremendous skill, tremendous talent.” Even so we cannot deny the charm of many of his drawings. In spite of their slovenly incompetence they are natural and homogeneous, and have the kind of unity which we particularly value in a work of art. They are spontaneous and sure watercolor sketches. Perhaps a more thoroughly developed picture would reveal the painter’s incompetence, and we ask ourselves: what is it that protects this restless man from such a discovery?

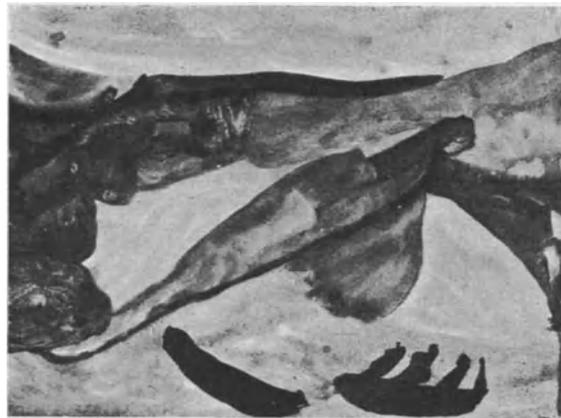
Is it thought? Or instinctive sureness? Some of each may be alive in him, because his work has a characteristic style which we recognize from a distance, but his basic psychological attitude can be shown somewhat more clearly. Apparently the world with its overly rich display of forms and colors does not mean much to him. All the reports about Orth agree that he is indifferent to it and instead plays with pieces of his clothing and talks to himself. He is a man who has freed himself from his relationship with the world. It has no value for him and he does not feel responsible to it. He broods the time away, has turned completely into himself, and is kept from vegetating for long periods only by the fact that his nutrition is regulated by the orderlies. At the same time, however, rays of psychic spontaneity continually break through: whatever can be painted, be it paper, books, or walls, inside or out, inspires him even during days of complete dullness. In this confused, unapproachable patient we see a variation of the configurative urge which is still closely related to the indeterminate active urge, and which causes him to throw himself almost indiscriminately at all objects which answer his purpose at all. He is implicitly less concerned with the production of a picture than with his memories which allow him no rest, particularly of the sea with its immensely varied display of colors and forms and the ship on which he served when he still faced life with ambition.

We have now described two components which are immediately evident in his works: a single-minded, active urge existing despite his general apathy, and a lively fund of perceptual recollections. We already noted that his drawings and paintings cannot be dismissed as arbitrary smears because a unifying tendency in form as well as in color is unmistakable in them. A skeptic may object that Orth simply proceeds, as the medical history states, with 10 colors at once and thereby arrives at an effect of wet colorfulness like that of marbled endpapers whose colors are similarly mixed, squeezed, and distributed by brushes and combs. We have also mentioned that a playful urge to activity, which

is easily guided by accidentally appearing forms, plays an important part in his work. It is most important now to grasp the true configurative impulses, and we must admit that, even though the same memories surface time and again and give rise to the same motifs, the resulting pictures are nevertheless not really stylized but rather diverse in a number of ways. The configurative power shows itself precisely in the diversity and inventiveness of the variations and in the way in which Orth achieves a uniform effect by linear decoration, the arrangement of colors, and the steady rhythm of his strokes, especially in his crayon drawings.

Orth's style can be characterized even more precisely. It seems that he always keeps the complete surface of a drawing in mind. What he projects of his motif in the case of the three-master at sea in Figure 129 is merely a stylized form, a long hull with three upright lines to represent the masts and expanse of sails. Using the dim form as a center, he draws other lines in relation to it, sometimes directing them toward it, sometimes framing it while at the same time balancing right and left. The choice of colors also is so peculiar that we are tempted to use the word "artful," as when the gray-violet ship is separated from an even more violet part below by a blue strip, while the sails extend into a bright red background and the four corners are filled with blue-gray, yellow-gray, olive-gray, and strawberry red hues. We can see that the colors were hastily applied, wet on wet, and a few fingerprints have not been removed. The overall effect of the color combinations implies that Orth intended to give the impression of a sunset at sea. Anyone who is attuned to his colors and their arrangement can certainly experience aesthetic satisfaction.

On the other hand, sober and critical observation will surely isolate Orth's major fault, the slovenly, aimless brush strokes which betray his great technical indifference and lack of discipline. Even if the beginnings of order are implicit in his arrangement, his work does not make a point of the kind that artists usually make. Above all else his work lacks the finality which it would normally be given by being organized with a certain consciousness and deftness. Instead of the configurative certainty which normally manifests itself in individual strokes and in the placement of accents we find Orth laying paint on impulsively and awkwardly with little regard for effects. He babbles with the brush. Comparisons between his 10 extant seascapes show that all share this fault, and that it is also a part of other motifs, like Figure 130.



Case 50

**Fig. 130.**  
Landscape (Water color).

29 × 21 cm.



Case 50 **Fig. 131.** 21 × 16 cm.  
Woman at Table (Crayon).

The few pictures showing human forms, particularly “The Woman at the Yellow Table,” Figure 131, are also dominated by unifying tendencies at the expense of the representational ones. We can recognize the childish incompetence of the drawer simply by the fact that he has not foreshortened the table top in perspective but has tipped it into the plane of the picture. It could be said with some justice, of course, that any artist can be charged with incompetence only when he is aware that foreshortening in perspective is “correct” but is unable to achieve it. We must be careful, in other words, not to charge an artist with incompetence simply because he has not done what we expect. Only a discrepancy between desire and ability can be considered incompetence in this sense. Here we are more concerned first with the motivations of the drawer, a question of psychology, and only then with the extent to which his work acquired artistic qualities, which is a question of aesthetics. In “The Woman at the Yellow Table” we find once



Case **Fig. 132.** 21 × 17 cm.  
Abduction (Crayon).

again all three unifying tendencies represented: the linear-decorative, the colorful-decorative, and that of the strokes. The completely dominant, strongly yellow oval of the table is in the center. The figure on the right extends into an empty space and is supported in back by a dark, vertical line. To the left a stream of linear curves pours around the oval table. The color distribution is more strictly balanced. A rectangle in red and green in the upper left-hand corner is opposed to the woman who has the same colors; they also appear to the left of the table. The motif, a woman at a round table, has become a centered composition without, however, resembling a poster. The awkward crudity of Orth's strokes corresponds entirely to that of his marine paintings. We cannot fathom what he "means" by the flowing bands of color. Nevertheless, we cannot deny that a configurative tendency was at work which considered form, color, and area, but not objective representation.

As we said, the same major traits occur also in Orth's other pictures containing figures, like Figure 132. We can easily smile at the childishly awkward form of the horse, but we should concentrate instead on the integration of the bundle of figures within the borders, and on the outline which connects the end of the horse's tail, its feet, mouth, and the rider's head before gliding away with the blue scarf at the upper edge! The prime attraction of this drawing is its dynamism. Everything turns on the stormy movement of the rider on his spirited horse. His bent head with the flowing scarf shows an impetuous forward motion to which the embrace of the red figure is completely subordinated. Anyone who has felt the dynamic vitality which persists even when harnessed into a strict, circular composition, will justly consider all the bad or "incompetent" qualities of the picture as of secondary importance, especially if he is also able to see through the cheap superficial virtuosity of some "real" art. Orth is clearly able to achieve a strongly artistic tension between an expressive motif and strict form, a quality rarer than realistic power and often destroyed by it. It is important to us to be able to demonstrate that this eminent artistic quality is simply and convincingly embodied in the picture, which shows no schooling or talent in the usual sense.

Another drawing, Figure 133, makes an almost monumental impact with the same means. Its two large figures are drawn in ink and appear to be copied from monuments. They are dominated by the restraint imposed by the contours of what we assume was a block of stone, and only their hands are freed. The figures seem to be supported by bases, and canopies float above them. The squares in the drawing's corners affirm the unity of the whole. We are reminded of medieval tombs. Indeed, the legs of the figure on the left seem to be armored and spurs are evident. The robe on the figure on the right indicates a woman, however. Should we compare the two figures to the ancestor figures of primitives? Unfortunately we have been unable to learn for certain whether Orth lived with magic conceptions like so many of his fellow sufferers. We can therefore only suggest that possibility, having established how the figures' monumentality grows out of the unifying features of the picture.

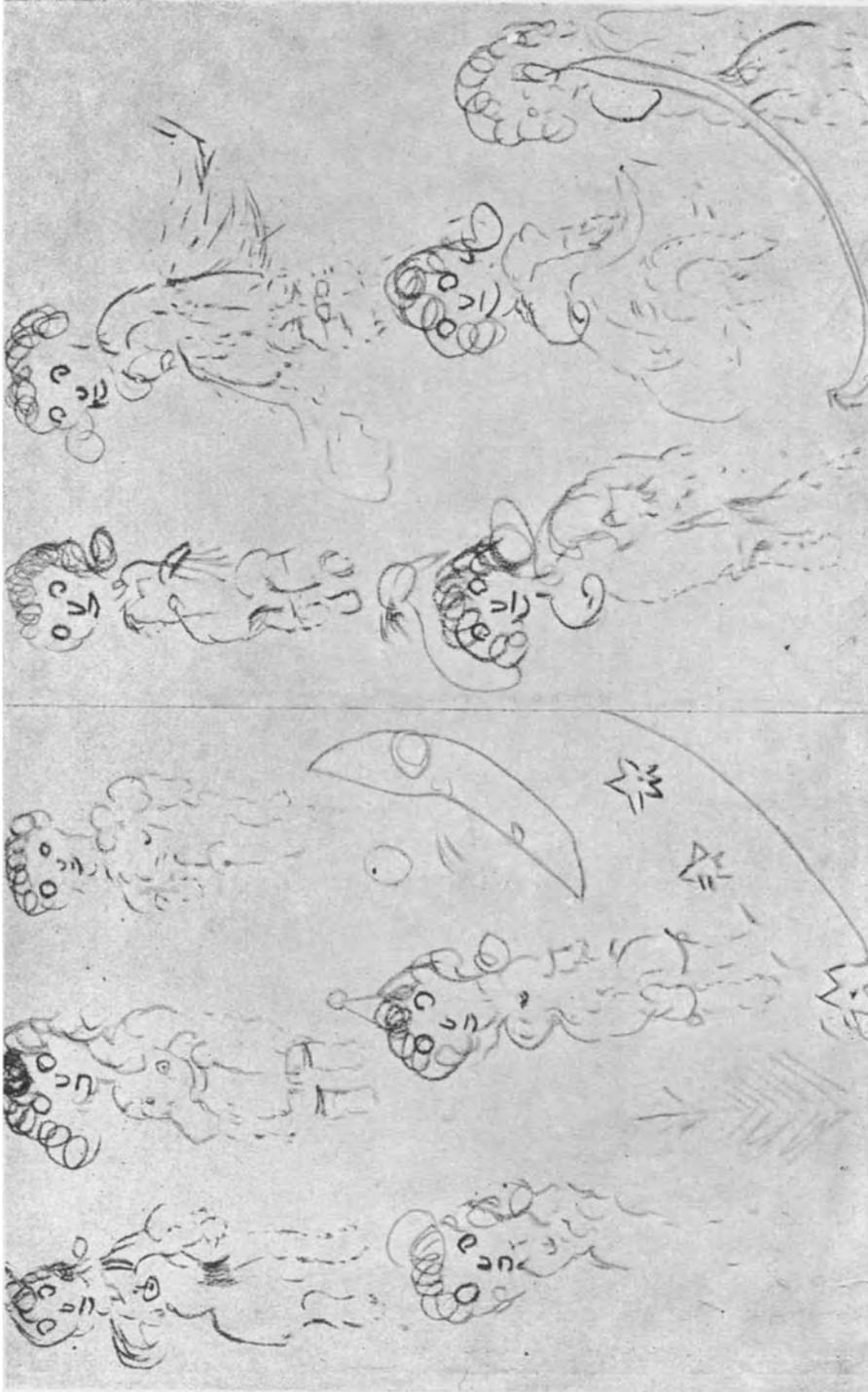
We should mention, however briefly, that Orth also produced a number of "catatonic" drawings. In these, as in the typical pieces discussed above, human figures of various sizes are mixed up with small ships and animals, especially horses. In one of them, for example, a person lies in a bed at which a small eerie figure is working, and tables constructed strangely like machines bear bottles and strange vessels, yet the unifying tendency which we found characteristic of Orth is not absent either. Curves run over the whole drawing, and shading composed of lines running in various directions covers everything as if with a veil, producing a carpetlike weave from the confusion of details.



Case 50

**Fig. 133.** Two Figures (Pencil).

33 × 41 cm.



48 x 32 cm.

**Fig. 134.** Figure Scribbles (Pencil).

Case 50

Finally there are Orth's "ghost pictures," Figure 134. He filled whole notebooks with these airy apparitions in which his stroke appears to be completely altered even though they did not originate at any one particular time during which Orth was not also working on other pictures. For several reasons we must suspect that he was stimulated by hallucinations, especially because these drawings differ in every respect from his norm. It is their subject which fascinates him and which we assume he tries to capture in ever new attempts. A curly mask is dominated by wide open eyes; attached to it is a small, light body, sometimes in a flowing robe, usually with loop garters on the tiny legs, now with a hint of breasts, now with a visible navel, now armless, now with a serpentine arm — yet it is always the same ghostly creature. Our opinion about its hallucinatory origin is supported especially by Orth's formal variations. The unifying tendencies in which we recognized the specific quality of his pictures are absent except for one, namely the steady, tremulous, curving stroke which is so different from his usual drawing method that we must conclude that he felt a very strong impulse to change — most likely hallucinatory experiences.

## 7. Hermann Beil

Hermann Beil, born in 1867 and an agricultural worker from lower Saxony, comes from a troubled family. We know nothing about his father, who was already dead at the beginning of the 1880s. His mother was committed to a mental institution in 1885 because of mental disturbances and neglect. She was said to have been drinking heavily before that date. One of Beil's brothers has required hospitalization repeatedly since 1899 because he suffers from manic-depressive deliriums.

Beil was first brought to the asylum in 1904. The referring hospital was able to keep him only in a cell because he was violent. He was a totally neglected vagabond who talked incessantly and cheerfully, imposed himself trustingly and self-confidently on strangers, but was at the same time highly irritable, and would suddenly erupt into belligerence. Psychiatrically, he presented the typical picture of hypomania. Sometimes he called himself the son of Prince Waldemar or insisted that he had studied medicine. His excitability subsided in the course of half a year, and he became a friendly, quiet laborer who alternated between depressed and hypomanic moods, but who could be kept in a rural colony. At the end of 1906 a second strong state of excitement occurred during which he tore up blankets and could be restrained only by being confined in a locked room. This stage was followed by a third outbreak in 1908, which was even more violent. But after some months he entered again a constructive period during which he was cooperative, capable, energetic, and full of practical ideas. At the same time he remained in a slightly hypomanic mood but finally went to his brother-in-law with the permission of the asylum. Only a month later, however, he returned, having now fallen into depression. He sat in a chair with an immovable face over which the tears ran; he confessed to thoughts of suicide, and he was totally unfit for work. In 1910 and 1911 a new phase of excitement occurred, after which he worked for two years for his brother-in-law. In 1913 he was once again admitted in a mixed manic-depressive condition which rapidly turned into hypomania and lasted only four months. In 1916 he was committed by the prison authorities while in a manic phase, having been put under investigative detention because of sheep stealing. Once again the illness passed after four months. The next phase, in 1920, once again a mixed stage, lasted for eight months, however, with brief interruptions.

Over the years Beil's symptoms have undergone psychopathological changes. His megalomania has become more pronounced: he now fires the staff physicians or raises their salaries, pastes the rubber seal from a beer bottle top to his forehead as a sign that he is king and emperor and has command of the whole army, is "the animal trainer of the whole world, prophet of love, set up by God above emperor and kings, the greatest rogue and rascal," proclaims that "I am the Lord and was crucified three times, but the Mother of God prays for me; my father Prince Waldemar has always given me suits," etc. Hallucinations are mentioned from 1910 on. Beil noticed gypsies in the window who wished to take him away. He clearly saw the wagon, although he admits it could

have been a dream. "I have flown here over the houses – but then the girl talks only of marriage – because of my brother I must remain in the asylum, this one [pointing to himself] is too dumb." The Lord is on the wall and had told him to tear up his blanket; not Beil but God's strength had done it.

We wonder, of course, whether these symptoms do not compel us to make a diagnosis of schizophrenia, but Beil is always described as in a "luxuriant mania," emotionally completely responsive, deeply attached to his brother, and has acquired almost no eccentricities of speech or behavior. Even if our biographical facts about him are few, we can nevertheless extract from them some major traits of Beil's personality. He is a rough vagabond type, quite adaptable to all kinds of work when he is quiet, but inclined to dawdle and quibble when the opportunity is available, and he is not tied down by regular work. Although we have no certain knowledge about his intelligence, he does not seem to be an imbecile. The spontaneity for which he is praised is paired with his adaptability, and he has invented housekeeping and agricultural methods so practical that he has been rewarded with extra rations. He also learned house painting on the side, and carries out the concomitant chores by himself.

Except for his worst days, when he had to remain in a locked room, Beil almost always had a strong urge to draw during his phases of excitement. This urge could hardly be considered a need for configuration in the full sense of the word. Rather, it was related to a simple urge to activity which was expressed simultaneously in his compulsive verbosity with its transitory ideas, and in his many activities. During these periods he covered all the paper he could lay his hands on, primarily with human figures. He especially favored toilet paper for this elevated purpose, presumably because it was most accessible to him. His simple heads and figures are plumply smeared and show primarily a tendency toward decorative simplification. The axis of a body, for example, is likely to be emphasized by a vestlike, colored band, the nipples and navel are stressed, and sometimes the genitals as well. The eyes of his figures are always large and staring, and their tongues often hang out. Their fixed masklike grimaces are reminiscent of idols. Besides his drawings we have some very confused larger and smaller sheets on which partial landscapes, heads, and figures are only hinted at, as if the pencil could not stop in the restlessness of smearing. Finally there is a third group showing whole figures drawn with a peculiar tremulous line, without any shading.

The last group is especially characteristic of Beil. Furthermore, we have three sheets dated, respectively, 1907, 1913, and 1920, which belong to it, and we can therefore attempt to trace the effect of practice on his work. The fantastic figure in Figure 135, which dates to 1907, is almost completely dissolved into ornamental playfulness. Whatever model Beil may have had in mind was probably a mere outline of a manikin rather than an explicitly physiological woman. It is remarkable how logically he adapts his decorative lines to the basic human dimensions. He clearly distinguishes the chest (from which he also separates the shoulders), abdomen, and legs, although he stresses their connections with a few lines. Though the skirt is treated almost as a piece of ceramics, he again emphasizes the lines of the legs which also supply him with a dividing motif for the surface of the skirt. The edge of the skirt as well as of the jacketlike upper garment end in drool points, as if done from an excess of the impulse of movement. The stumps of the arms, however, which seem to flutter in the wind like fur tails, make a very strange impression and are not at all reminiscent of real arms. They are matched by the head ornaments which proceed upward like fireworks, in long, thin, curving lines, and yet conform to the strict symmetry which dominates the whole ornamental work. If we find



Case 10      **Fig. 135.**      9 × 15 cm.  
Feminine Figure (Pencil).

the characteristic features of this drawing only in the mixture of ornamental display and organic construction and symmetry, as well as the considerable unobjectivity, we ignore one other major mark: its peculiar tremulous lines or, more accurately, its curved lines. They are distinguished from similar lines caused by organic tremors by the fact that they result not in zigzags but in what graphologists call arcades. By trial and error we can easily convince ourselves that Beil's lines result from conscious movements which can even follow one another quite deliberately as he slows down his progress on the paper correspondingly. At any rate they, as well as the additions to the figure, express a tendency to bombastic enrichment which is typical of hypomania.

Tremulous strokes predominate in "Portrait of a Lady," Figure 136, which Beil drew in 1913, but in it he does not confine himself to a purely linear method. Instead he lays out areas which he fills with dots, scribbles, and variously directed strokes, giving the picture structural uniformity despite its representational ambiguity. The composition is traditionally complete, however, and was presumably modeled on a periodical illustration. Beil's medical history confirms that he liked to copy such illustrations in peculiarly distorted ways. It is rewarding to look at the drawing's details with this knowledge and to discover how Beil in his dark striving happens on artistic principles which we are used to seeing all too often only as conscious technical stratagems. Aside from the aforementioned unification of the drawing by its friableness, they include the emphasis on the head by a moderate strengthening of the outline, and most especially by the fact that the drawing's one and only straight line parallels the head on its left.

Figure 137, in which the same technique is developed further and to more varied effect, originated in the middle of Beil's pronounced mania of 1920. The original tremulous line is used much less, but numerous kinds of irregular zigzags and scribbles as well as forms reminiscent of garlands have developed out of it which, with their long lines and fragments, contest the picture's disquieting content. Once again Beil probably used a model, perhaps a female dancer or a figurine from Zuloaga. The upper structure would then be either freely fantasized or interpreted from any or all of the other elements of the picture. Numerous human and animal heads and figures are interpreted into the scribbles. The gorilla head in the genital region on the other hand is probably added intentionally. We note that in comparison to the figure drawn in 1907 the organic structure of the body is completely neglected. This figure is in the process of dissolving into abstraction, into a rich lace pattern which is nevertheless filled with a luxuriant vitality that resists all order. Again we see how a compact and organic entity strives to become liberated and vegetative. The proof that Beil was dissolving models in his drawings was finally brought by one of his most recent works. Figure 138 b is an original illustration and 138 a is its rendering by Beil; we can hardly speak of a copy because he has used only the outlines. His uninhibited scribble mania, familiar to us from the other pictures, has caused him to fill every empty space and even to embellish the original whose insipidity seemed to demand enlivening additions.

The majestic figure in blue and yellow in Figure 139 comes from Beil's early period, as anyone can see immediately. Observers familiar with numerology, particularly in old church art, will note with surprise that this figure comprises the three ancient, sacred shapes: the square, the triangle, and the circle, which in Christianity represent God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Besides the geometric construction, however, we note that the organic structure of the body is also stressed by the way in which a part of the chest, with a wedge waist, appears to be stuck into the hip. Furthermore, a curve of the lower torso is emphasized by a half wreath of deep blue, scrawled forms. They are resolved toward the bottom into dancing goblins performing a spooky jig above the dark center of the genital area. In the middle of this shadowy area, emphasized only



Case 10 **Fig. 136.** 12 × 14 cm.  
Portrait of a Lady (Pencil).



Case 10

**Fig. 137.** Idol? (Pencil).

25 × 33 cm.



Case 10

Fig. 138a. Double Portrait (Pencil).

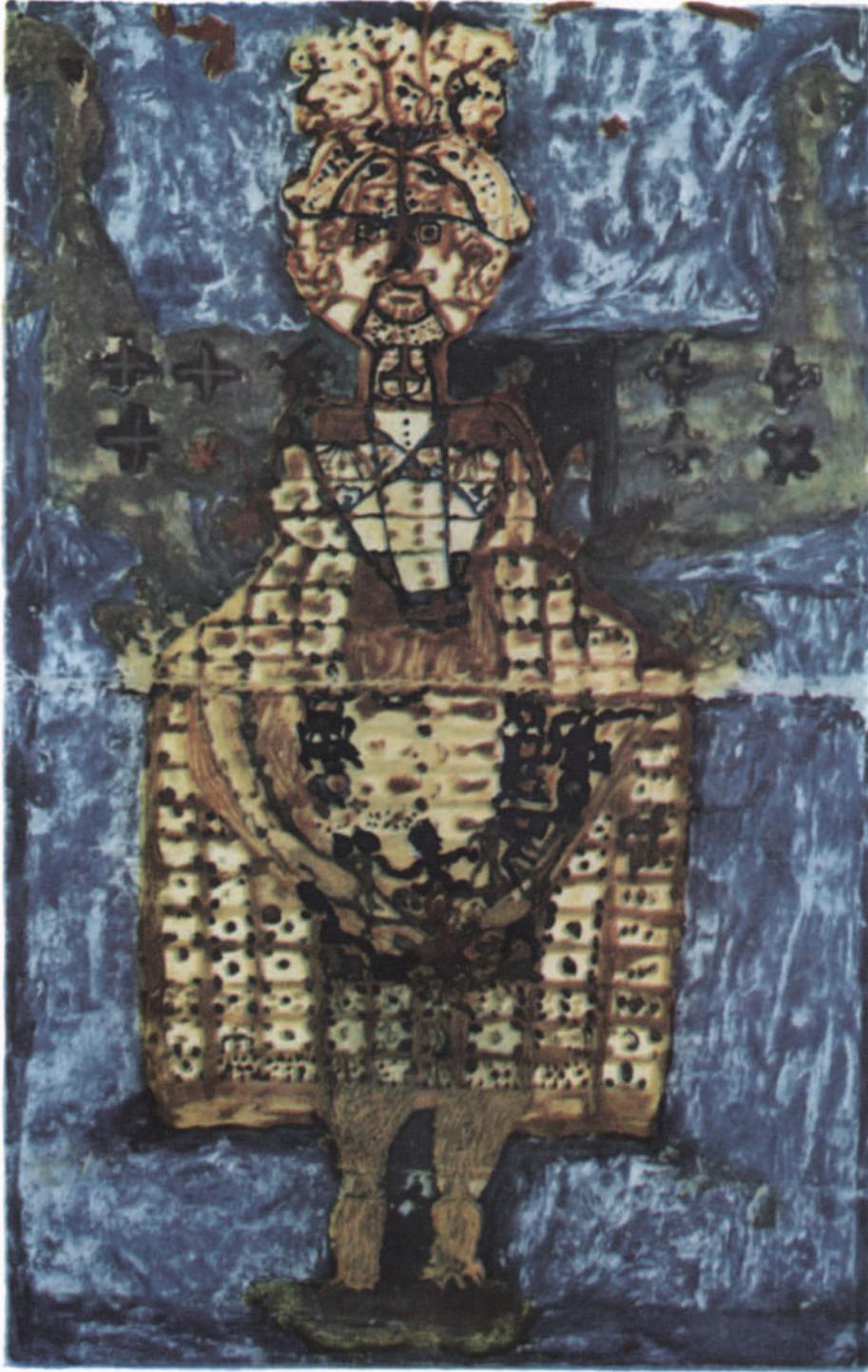
21 × 31 cm.



**Fig. 138b.** Model for 138a.

by almost black spots, is a dark red loop, unimposing but also unmistakably the vulva. From it the legs, which appear only as short stumps under the robe, are barely outlined in pencil as if they could be seen through the material. The fat, absolutely round head which with its strange cauliflower ornament sits on the thin neck is, like the body, completely dematerialized, in spite of the discrete indications of the main organs, by intricate ornamentation which nevertheless retains the main features. The division of the body into small squares which resemble tiles gives the figure a one-dimensional appearance, while its coloration and delicate shading, reminiscent of faience, speak for three dimensions. The viewer who values spatial clarity is even more puzzled by the wing arms which, with their threatening and solemn gesture, raise the monumental impact of this strictly symmetrical figure to the mystical and sacred.

If we now, as in the other cases, look for symbolic content, we are embarrassed because nothing of the sort can be found. We know of no statements Beil has made about his pictures nor do they themselves offer any foothold for symbolic interpretation. Several times we found playfully transformed models, and we considered it important that during states of excitement he managed to achieve a unique technical uniformity with an almost cunning effect in compulsive, unreflective drawing. A particularly valuable bit of knowledge lies in having proof before our eyes that it is precisely this unreflective, indiscriminating state which favors uniform execution. (In other words, the essential element is not the excitement but rather the urgent, uniform impulses unbroken by reflection.) The arrangement of the pictures was in any case already determined by the models which Beil, in his manic urge for enrichment, merely over-embellished. We see in this



Case 10 **Fig. 139.** Sacramental (Idolatrous) Figure? (Water color). 20 × 32 cm.

kind of drawing (preferably based on a model, whether an actual picture or the visualization of a real object) to which the evenness of the technique gives a strange unity often accompanied by an exotic luxuriance, a specific expression of the manic state, because we have several other examples of very similar origins.

It is far more difficult to analyze the strangeness of the blue and yellow figure psychopathologically. We cannot deny being tempted, under the direct influence of the picture, to feel in it precisely those solemn and supernatural components which would most likely be labeled schizophrenic. In that case we would try to attribute a part of the effect to the figure's gesture, its resemblance to a rigid idol, and the spatial uncertainty. Undeniably, something remains which we would prefer to see diagnosed as schizophrenia. Let us note only that this picture is especially suited to introduce us deeply into the psychology of the demonic, but a discussion of that subject, like that of the interpretation of symbols as such, must be postponed.

## 8. Heinrich Welz

Heinrich Welz, Baron, a lawyer, was born in 1883. Several members of his family, especially his father and uncle, were eccentric and neurasthenic. He himself was healthy and talented as a child, but, remarkably, was also known as a faddist. At the age of puberty he seems to have been very sensitive and idealistic, and he wrote much poetry. We know of a few love affairs from his early 20s which he incorporated into his poems and even into a drama. He is said to have been very exuberant at times and to have over-exerted himself mentally and physically. Subsequently he developed depressions and a weakness of the heart, and sought the advice of a psychiatrist. We doubt that he was in a real state of exhaustion. His later life makes it more probable that his fatigue and hypochondria were early signs of his schizophrenia, just like his depressions and bizarre opinions. We cannot be sure just how far his nonconformist opinions, for example about morals, can be attributed to his talents or to what extent they may also be early symptoms of his illness, without knowing his original personality. Welz had an affair with a woman suffering from the most difficult kind of hysteria. He wanted to marry her in spite of continual conflict which included suicide threats, and he took her abroad with him. At the same time he worked on a sociological study, *Regarding Centralization*, which, according to his brother, was unclear but nevertheless quite rational and not pathologic. Suddenly he stopped communicating with relatives whom until then he had visited daily and stayed in bed for four weeks, until his physician decided that he had to go to an asylum. He then sent his mistress away and remained alone in his apartment for another 10 days until his brother took him home. During these days he hallucinated more and more, talked nonsense, and suffered from hypochondria, a fear of being poisoned, and sudden excitements.

Welz's medical history at the asylum by and large also verifies the symptoms just mentioned. In addition it reports his strong urge to repeat movements and positions, especially somersaults, which he executes recklessly, and secondly, his urge to discover magic, supernatural relationships for all external events and especially for his own strange experiences. At first, as usual, he attributed his physical sensations to magnetism, especially the disturbed polarization of his body. To correct this disturbance he turns somersaults at distinct intervals, but the corrections become really effective when he directs the somersaults toward places which at the moment are important in his life, for example Schweinfurt when his mistress happens to be there. His delusions are filled with such magic. He has to keep his eyes shut for a day because by opening them he will rob his siblings of their strength. Or he attaches the names of his relatives or sociological terms to the trees in the garden and, in lining up these trees, each of which bears several names, from various directions, discovers surprising relationships which he considers new and real knowledge, of course. Sometimes he stands for hours at an open window with a spoon in his hand and stares into the sky, saying, "I shall change the position of the

stars by an act of will." He has also constructed a most peculiar, tidy, and apparently strictly systematic conceptual framework which includes the following categories: willology, ideology, justiceology, beautiology, artology, zoology, sexology, jokeology, naturology, timeology, and formology. His descriptions of them, scribbled down in a small hand with a sharp pencil, contain quite a few neat ideas, but they only make the absurdity of the system appear even more grotesque.

The first phase of Welz's illness, during which he experienced some strong states of excitement as well as periods of catatonic stupor, passed in about a year and a half, but the remission was only temporary. A few months later Welz was committed in a worse condition, and since then his illness has been continuous. His repeated movements, especially his wild grimacing, have become more violent; his uninhibited, compulsive actions, into which he often erupts straight out of a stupor, have become more impetuous. In a flash he rises from a rigid attitude, slaps an attendant or physician and lies down to sink back into rigidity. Or he suddenly cuts into his forehead with a dull knife.

At first these strong catatonic symptoms would regress temporarily. Welz would then be approachable and lively, read the newspaper, analyze his dreams, occupy himself with his sociological systems, and draw a little. But he has become more and more confused and mannered. Most important to him continued to be problems of thought transmission, and he would closely scrutinize the root of the nose of his conversational partners. Sometimes he would be a "social physician" carrying out cures at a distance. He presented childish games with the same seriousness, as when he picked up a green leaf and described its mystical relationship to a patient named Greenleaf. He claimed that he could clearly feel how his inhibited thoughts freed themselves and projected themselves forward from a certain point in his brain. He elaborated on his earlier polarization ideas by calculating how one can best overcome the attraction of the earth by spinning around rapidly and then ascending vertically.

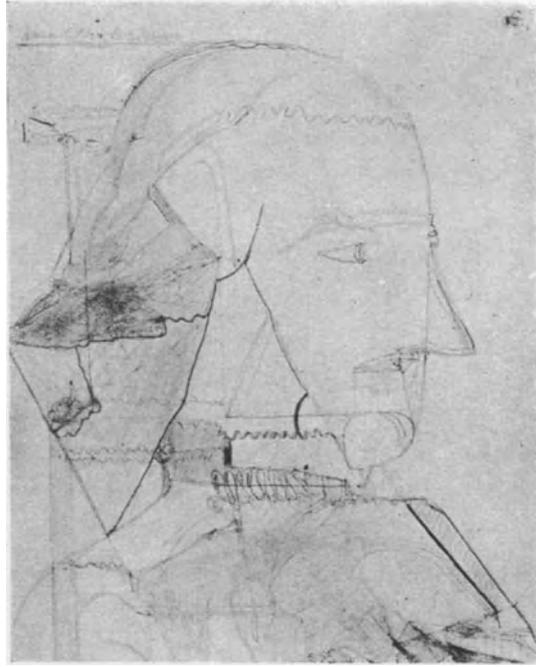
Now he hardly talks at all and is apparently always occupied with his hallucinations. Once he explicitly explained his silence by the telepathy with which he maintains communications with the whole world, which makes speech superfluous. Sudden violent actions, which he calls cramps and attributes to sexual excitement, break through his stupor as before.

Welz had already drawn and painted a little as an amateur, and he probably knows the history of art up to 1912. During his first stay in the asylum he produced a number of pencil sketches of ducks, chickens, children, and landscapes which show an average, somewhat insipid, skill. Some watercolor landscapes are more interesting, with a surer perspective and lively colors, but at the time he painted them he also tried to reproduce his delusions on paper. From this period we have for example the drawing, "Circle of Ideas of a Man, Projected on the Outside World," Figure 140. In it we see a mighty head which looks as if made from a slab of stone breaking open at the top and transformed into a bouquet of small tableaux, including a palace, a tournament, a lion, and women. A metal strip with nails seems to hold the skull together. Its even construction and the precision of many parts, notably the hand, betray the practiced drawer. The head's disquieting effect is probably due to the calm objectivity with which Welz depicts the "projected circle of ideas," as if it were as tangible as the man's head.

"The Woman's Portrait a la Liliefors," Figure 141, which seems to date to the same time, is remarkable for the contrast between the construction of the nape of the neck and the delicate outline of the face. Welz apparently once again intended to convey streams of thought and similar abstractions, especially by the wavy lines. We could no

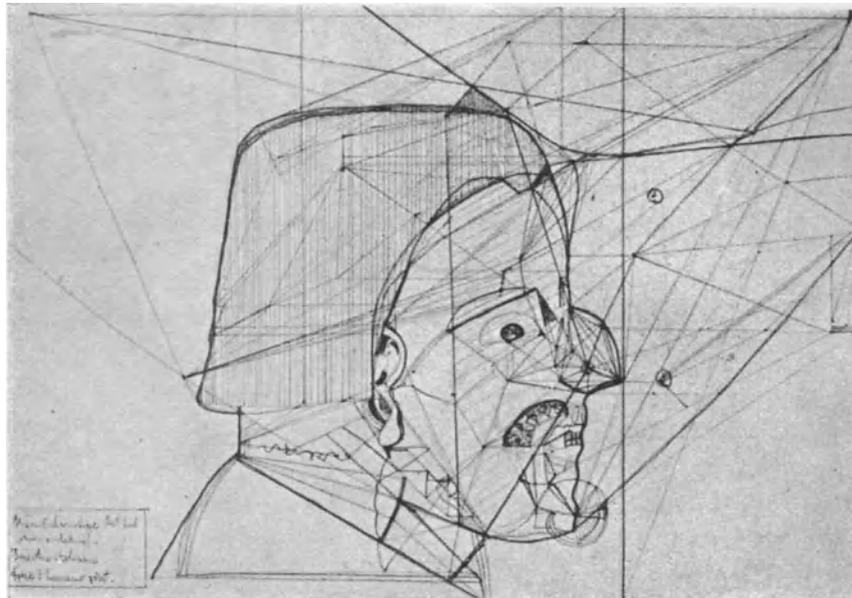


Case 193 **Fig. 140.** 24 × 33 cm.  
 "Circle of Ideas of a Man" (Pencil).

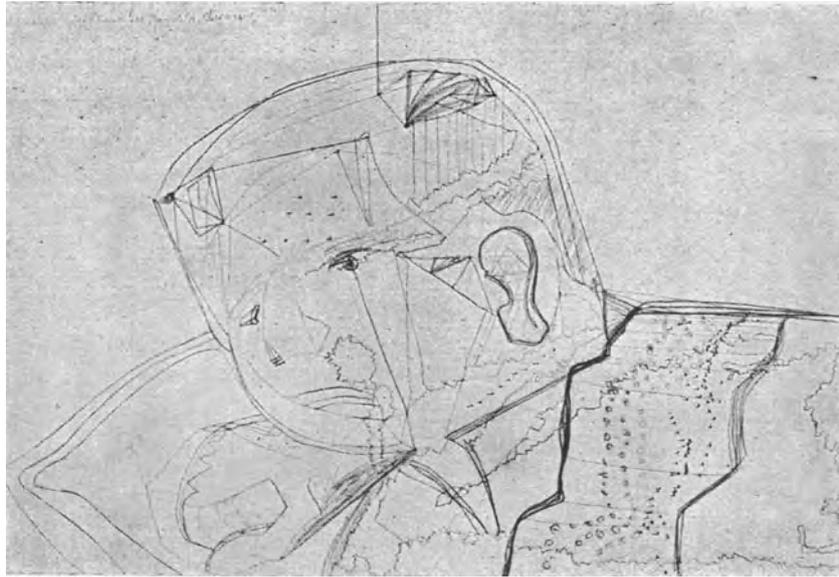


Case 193 **Fig. 141.** 16 × 21 cm.  
 Woman's Portrait (Pencil).

longer find out whether a picture by the Swedish painter Liliefors served as a model. The particular problem inherent in this picture becomes clear only in Figure 142, in which the drawer has dissolved a profiled head quite logically into geometric designs. Welz assumes the existence of various centers from which lines of force radiate, quite in keeping with his ideas about the projection of thoughts and the polarization of the



Case 193 **Fig. 142.** Geometrical Portrait (Pencil). 26 × 18 cm.



Case 193

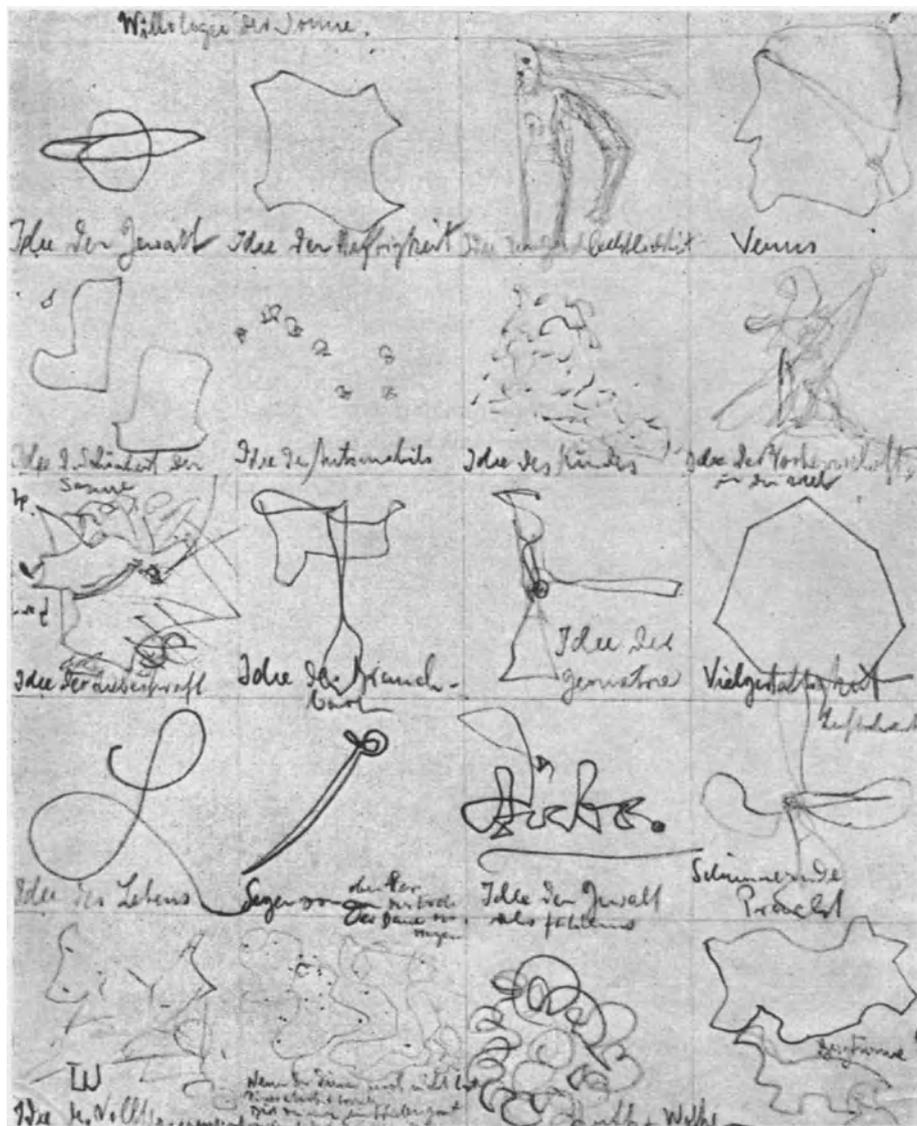
**Fig. 143.** Portrait (Pencil).

26 × 18 cm.

human body in relation to the earth and other bodies. It is unlikely that Welz would consider any one particular line of force a constant which he would always try to show the same way. We are again dealing with a gesture, that of regularity, and feel compelled to ask only one question: what element in the drawing gives us the feeling of regularity while we think of arbitrariness without arriving at a balance?

In the “Vital Observation of Pastor Obermaier,” Figure 143, regularity and arbitrariness are finally combined and developed, if you will, into a valid formal language. Every suggestion of the physical, almost every realistic detail, is suspended. On first glance we might think of the picture as a sketch of a landscape. The linear grooves, the furrows of a field, and the rows of trees are included because of Welz’s obvious liking for ornamental display. But we are brought up short because despite all of the playful dissolution we seem to see not just any human outline but apparently that of an individual appearing out of the confusion of lines. Did the drawer succeed in his intention to produce an abstract portrait without realistic detail? Undoubtedly, in our opinion. Welz solved his bizarre problem surprisingly well. We may dismiss the problem, but we cannot discredit Welz’s achievement.

Yet Welz himself proves that his very idea contains the seed of absurdity, or, better, he demonstrates anew that every thought, in itself unexceptionable, becomes unreasonable when followed single-mindedly to its logical conclusion. Following his blind urge to systematize Welz gives free reign to his tendencies to abstraction and tries to represent ideas graphically in a curve or in a very few lines. Apparently he believes himself able to immerse himself so deeply in an idea that a curve resulting from his concentration will magically incorporate some of the extract of the idea. When we look at one of his catalogs of expressive curves like “The Willology of the Sun,” Figure 144, even the most broad-minded among us will not doubt the sad fiasco produced here by a basically correct idea which is literally reduced *ad absurdum* by Welz’s completely uncritical attitude. He is correct in his belief that whatever fills a mind completely finds expression in graphic representations, but he is wrong in thinking that actual ideas can be represented. Magic and witchcraft would be required for that. Generally speaking, only the dynamic factors



Case 193

Fig. 144. "Willology of the Sun" (Pencil).

17 x 21 cm.

of a psychic process can be graphically realized, not their conceptual "contents." Welz in fact practices pure magic with "The Napoleon-Curve," Figure 145, in which he connects, with a curve reminiscent of a propeller, all the places in central Europe which were important in Napoleon's campaigns. When connected the most important of the lines produce a curve resembling the capital letter "N." According to Welz, if we trace it several times daily by moving our heads along a similar imaginary curve, we begin to understand Napoleon's behavior and attitudes.

During the most recent years Welz has not drawn anything and has indeed withdrawn into his own silence. Inspired by our visit, he spoke for the first time in a long while and revealed that he had given up drawing for the same reason he gave up speaking: it is no longer necessary for him. In the future, he said, he would simply strew graphite over his drawing paper and would force the particles into lines and forms by staring at them.



## 9. Joseph Sell

Joseph Sell, an architectural draftsman, was born in 1878, the son of a Bavarian state construction supervisor. His family is not supposed to have suffered mental illness. Sell himself was a weak, sensitive child who even suffered cramps on seeing St. Nicholas. During his school years he remained a spoiled youngster, liked to be alone, was always gentle, and was often eccentric. A brother stresses that Sell had trembled whenever fellow pupils were being disciplined. He was an average pupil, learned carpentry, and then attended the construction trades school in order to become an architectural draftsman for the railroad. After he had suffered nervous disorders for some years and had often been treated for them, his distrust, especially of his superiors, increased into real paranoia. He believed that he was to be murdered, that people spoke about him strangely, and that someone was shooting into his window. One day in 1907 he got into bed, lit a candle, and acted so bizarrely that he was committed to an asylum.

There it soon became known that he had heard voices for at least three years and that he occupied himself with delusions. He claimed to play a crucial role in the balance between Germany and Austria about which highly placed persons knew more and which was related to the earth's magnetism. He also speculated about producing men and flowers chemically. He was quite pleased to listen to his voices. Sometimes relatives spoke, sometimes "all the people." He also had visual hallucinations in which he saw, for example, a heart with a saber or an aphorism in the sky saying, "Nature offers man the keys to the heavenly kingdom." His behavior was stiff and somewhat foolishly cheerful. Although taciturn, he was approachable and friendly, and spoke affectedly while rolling his eyes. He had no noticeable physical abnormality.

After Sell had briefly denied having delusions in order to be released from the asylum, his illness recurred. He complained of being robbed of sleep by a strange treatment purposely applied to his horsehair pillows; the voices he heard were produced by the physicians to confuse him, and they knew the art of relieving a man of his thoughts and knowledge, which was very embarrassing. In a notation he proclaimed, "I have been ordered to represent God in making my life confession publicly in front of all believers and at the same time to proclaim the word which teaches you to pray. Responsibly Jos. Sell, Niveau on the Sea and on Land." He began to assume the title "Niveau" permanently. "Gods rule with elements. Saints govern with peace. Whoever does not believe will submit." The following is even more confused: "I see myself called upon under no conditions does the work of God oblige to wish to represent in a matter."

Two short letters dated March 1908 lead to the center of Sell's delusions. The first is addressed to his brothers and sisters:

If you find it convenient to keep your brother Joseph alive you should arrange to have him liberated as soon as possible, after the same is to rule from the hospital, a lot of married

ladies wish to satisfy themselves indirectly, and since he does not offer himself for it he is continuously troubled with a so-called compromise device, in that one feeds him with the stench of corpses at night and tortures him the nastiest way and by electricity early heart disease is his lot, so that he can be removed overnight if he is forced to stay in one place and cannot cross the borders...

The second letter is addressed to the "Despicable State Destruction Agency... Undersigned permits himself the question how long he is still to be there for that married people, hysterical spinach-quail which he already has listed to satisfy more closely in a notation delivered to Dr. N., after he wants to marry. Prince Niveau."

In long letters to offices and princes Sell describes the physical sensations which are basic to his conceptions. He has recently become aware that his illness of the last seven years was not natural. Now he has

the power to communicate with a lot of personalities connected with his person who wished to get rid of their illnesses by transmitting them to him by telepathy (remote perception) . . . even the illnesses of the patients about to be operated, possibly to substitute in fatal cases. Either the illnesses have an even effect or the same are stored up in Telefunken, which are rationed out to him and develop only gradually, accompanied by colossal pain, *e.g.* intense scratches in the nerves of the eyes, from the inside out, electrification of the various extremities, cracking of the skull bones as well as the vertebrae of the neck and spine, tickling in all possible parts of the body, like the eyelids, the ear, the nose and throat cavities, the genitals, etc. His heart is the constant toy of others and they often take such liberties with it that the whole body suffers from submersion. Most recently heavy oscillating chest and back pains accompany his existence and because of revenge that it was found out that this is no natural illness I had to listen to nasty accusations through understanding, tortures did not suffice, unpleasant odors were transmitted, whole nights of the odors of corpses, hospitals, feminine genitals, farts, spit, brandy, and electrically transmits to my person even the hang-over. I am not even allowed the sense of taste. If I drink my milk they bring me intensive acid which electrically tickles me through the teeth . . . Electric current constantly dominates the lower feet, often also the whole body . . . daily decline of the appetite because of the exchange of the stomach acid, as well as exchange of the backbone marrow substance, exchange of the ether body (manikin system) with soul exchange, everything done by electricity . . . Most recently I am bothered with uninterrupted injections of breaking wind (epidemicising) so that I feel a cancer transmission in the rectum as well as throat, where I feel the burning of an old person, proved itself . . . The undersigned testifies that he can hardly walk for 3-4 weeks, since he almost uninterruptedly struggles in the electric circuit, together with corpses and ice, and receives nightly 1,000-10,000 to the best of his knowledge thousand to ten thousand farts injected into his body . . .

He usually signs, "Niveau, World-Nature-Director."

Two major conceptions emerge from this wild confusion of physical irritations, emotional reactions, and delusions which continue to constitute the center of Sell's outlook: an electric circuit, fed by a generator erected in his home town or in the asylum, connects him with numerous institutions and transmits to him all the hideous experiences which he never tires of telling. By means of the shower bath he has been made receptive to the electric waves which move toward him through the air. So much for the mechanical, formal side of his delusional system which consists primarily of typical details. The other side, that of the ideas themselves and of their psychology, is rather more interesting and richer. What happens to him through the electric circuit into which he has been harnessed? Sell arranges physical sensations, instincts (wish fantasies), and the delusions

themselves very logically into a system which points unambiguously to his sado-masochistic needs. The central idea is that he has to suffer for others to experience pleasure. In fact, he finds his pleasure in this suffering. His drawings and the accompanying texts then add the sadistic supplement to his masochism.

As for the actual causes of his delusions, there is frequent mention in his writings that he has had himself whipped in a bordello, and that that fact had become known to his superiors. How true it is can no longer be determined. In a written statement which unfortunately is not dated but may, according to the handwriting, come from about 1912, Sell suddenly becomes very critical of the development of his personality and makes the kind of excellent analytical judgments not often found in cases of such advanced paranoiac dementia. His account is underlined with five crayons in different combinations. Its major parts are as follows:

To the Psychiatric Clinic. To the Ministry for Transport. Whether a state can be considered abnormal, or the undersigned? Was it not the undersigned's dead father Kaspar Sell, Royal Construction Supervisor, from R., his greatest and daily sorrow, which he continually discussed with his colleagues and friends in the presence of his person and stated that he was too shy. The undersigned indeed told himself that one would be better taken care of in a madhouse as long as one notes, in himself and the most intelligent people, the most enervating of all faults, 'the fear of the other sex.' At 16 I already told myself that one cannot very well establish an intimate relationship with any other lady, because of physical rape. Because of that one was and is now always tired of life, because he did not have the opportunity for a woman for one night in 37 years, and without a woman, when the parents died long ago, one can never be capable of living because he feels clearly that he swims among the people without rest or support, puts down no roots and would after all not have been born if the female sex were completely superfluous. When one yearns for marriage for 23 years, *i. e.*  $23 \times 365 = 8395$  times, or wishes to have the right to coitus at least once in a lifetime, one can never find rest. There was once a story in the paper of an artist who lived under the illusion that he could never marry because he was not able to support a wife. What causes it except for the most horrible of all diseases, which the doctors themselves have and cannot help others, 'the fear of the other sex.' How can an official be capable on duty when, as every dance instructor proves from his course, he cannot attract the lady he likes even to dance, much less for lifelong feeding costs.

Recently Sell has also spoken in the same vein. More interesting than the problem of sexual life in the asylum, which is taken very seriously by many patients and several physicians, is his own description of his youthful shyness as a basis for his later deviations, especially since the objective descriptions of his relatives fully agree with it. It means that his perversion did not originate in the illness as one symptom among others but psychologically antedated the illness even if Sell's descriptions of his corresponding activities are not credible.

Another document which shows this man, plagued by perversions, from quite another perspective is therefore especially valuable. In it he tries with the quiet pathos of the sophisticate to interpret his delusions as religious enlightenment. In another context isolated sentences from it could easily serve as models of devout meditations. We shall quote them because nobody, not even a layman, can have any doubts about the illness of the man who wrote them:

For every visitor of the institution there is the valid question: 'Have you seen apparitions or heard voices?' That is supposed to be a determining symptom for the doctor to be able to judge an illness. I permit myself to plead with the honorable gentlemen in their own

interest, whether they have really lost every belief in a higher being or have always lacked it, either to investigate thoroughly the apparitions in medical in short in hallucinations (errors), or to abstain from all questions in this regard when they have no other symptoms for a diagnosis of the mental state . . . Anyone who does not believe in supernatural powers will also never have desired apparitions or any at all, and whoever had no apparitions has no proofs for his belief and will continue to build only dubiously, without bases, and as long as human existence accompanies him he will look into the night, which is dead to him, while no rustling of an angel robed in heavy silks and bending over his bed can prove to him the presence of a high heavenly power, much less will the high crown which is suspended above all men night and day unfold for him. I am quite willing to believe always to have the desire to want to know how your invisible guardian companions and super-earthly world rulers look. But I am firmly convinced that possible imitators would soon give up the desire if they knew what enormous suffering such meetings entail. Without great suffering there would be no great joy on earth. It can be easily demonstrated why only people who are used to struggling between life and death with a smile and can face their purpose without fear, are mainly honored by pleasant apparitions, signs and visits . . .

Only he who has tried to evaluate apparitions in a state of illness will be able to anticipate apparitions in a state of health . . . But to fathom the effect of miracles and insight into the hidden in this science, the greatest of all on earth, the acquisition of apparitions may always remain a closed door to the man who is active only in his earthly profession . . . I confirm only that in undisturbedness supernatural beings are near and not as abstract apparitions but such as change noisily from the abstract into living concrete angels. I would be most grateful if in belief I give myself up to a devotion and had thereby to forgo every proof of apparitions . . . What consolation it was for me when, as I once left my bed while ill, a red glowing heart, resembling the eternal light and struck through by a golden dagger, rose up opposite me, slowly and evenly, during the period of about half a minute. The proof was not enough for me. That it was no empty illusion when three days later a sign with flaring golden yellow borders of light in church script revealed to me, 'Nature offers man the keys to the kingdom of heaven.' I was astounded by this sentence and cannot remember having read it before. The basic foundation of my religion was the arrival of the angel appearing with a rustle.

It is the same with the so-called hearing of voices which the gentlemen physicians also want to represent as sick. There is after all nothing more interesting than to understand the language of each animal, as well as to hear words in every sound caused by friction, *e. g.* the rustling of leaves, of springs and streams, the blowing of the wind and storm, the thunder, footsteps on gravel and the floor, the ring of church bells and the melodies of each musical instrument, as well as every movement of the muscles of his own body itself, that is to say no dead body exists for me but every body, even the rock, speaks as a construction of atomics because the rock only forms a consolidation, a unification of atoms of previous life, which is why it is not at all ridiculous but highly honorable for God that pagans have prayed to the rock, because the rock is silent only for most persons, but must be viewed by God himself as an organic body which can prove having been alive longer, as we know, than any other body, why, every chemist will be able to explain to himself.

Aside from that it is sad to wish to deny a man the right and the honor when he can prove that he has already worked many miracles and each day lets him work new ones, which he can prove as far back as his youth and on demand gladly gives information, after the same can already prove the most important in advance . . . Whoever loves his Creator more and scorns himself, him he gives into his left hand Amor's scales, into his right Niveau's whip in whose possession no night is so dark as not to reveal to him every world secret. I am recognized by the beyond, in this world one wants to scorn me.

But it has always been taught that God is everywhere and in all places, and for that reason one does not wish to admit, when the undersigned can prove it, that he must rule for this world and the next, because if he can hear and see everything that happens it can no longer be in doubt that he was not born for the mental hospital, but one can interest oneself most in his science, and that is the same science which Jesus Christ also possessed, and I believe just the same that the earthly court and the earthly judges have been most

mistaken when they believe they have the right to ridicule the ceremonies of God, after everything can be verified... Niveau, Baron von und zu Marblecrown.

Only a few more sentences referring to telepathy will be quoted here from Sell's many observations about his exceptional experiences:

Permit me to submit herewith a brief quote in reference to the area of transmission of thoughts, words, pictures, and emotions. For some time, after all, efforts are made in what way dream conceptions come to be and this science can be considered solved since one can by electricity make intellectual and emotional connections, so that one can communicate in this method with one another over certain distances as if each would address the other aloud, and one is even able to absorb in one's thought pictures what others imagine in their thought processes. That's how it is with dreams, they always depend on the conceptions and transmissions of a person not sleeping, after sleep has subordinated the mental activity to an involuntary function; most people after all dream continuously during sleep, only they cannot or will not remember their dreams and the thought process of a person itself is nothing more or less than an influence on the thoughts of fellow humans. As soon as a man is able not to think anything at all, which is the most difficult thing of all, he will observe that he can also direct and in that case rules one person, several, or his entire environment, and can call himself the God in charge to whom the aphorism applies, 'man thinks and God disposes.' In this way one can converse from one place with one's whole circle of acquaintances or follow their thought processes and even enter into sexual emotional relations so that it happens from time to time that one finds oneself in a continuous state of lust (and this explains the indirect conception of a virgin) or the opposite, that as soon as a person suffers, another receives in turn a feeling of well-being, and the affective power which can be pertinent here for sorrows and joys evens out and that explains itself as soon as a lot of people find themselves excited and torture themselves with suffering and chicanery; others who obey the command, 'man, don't aggravate yourself,' receive the opposite, a bath of lust...

The current to which Sell is connected and which connects him with the whole world mainly transmits thoughts directed toward him and diverted away from him. He hears everything that occurs in the world and is therefore able to understand more than others. He can also direct the world when he wants to. On the other hand, he is in the power of the directors of the current and other persons when these gain control of his "science" and, what is worse, use him. All physical pain results from the fact that others live off his vital power. Some of them are women who use him sexually, some are ill people, but mostly they are important persons. "Mentally ill persons are media and victims of electromotor satisfaction of aged courtiers," he announced one day in the ward, and at another time he said that "the official secret of the supervisors was to let his youth be substantially exchanged for age – his life for death." On the basis of his experiences he feels himself entitled to claim several thrones, even the papal throne, because he had also served Leo XIII as a medium, and the pope was therefore dependent on his support, just like the princes.

Sell's written statements make it abundantly clear that he is completely immersed in his delusional system; for that reason we have not considered a description of his personality very important. We learned from him as well as his relatives that he has been a quiet, shy person since childhood. About the time of his employment we know nothing except that he did not get on with his superiors because he felt they were prejudiced against him. His intelligence is substantially above average. His psychological insight is especially unusual. His judgment of social and political institutions is often shrewd in

getting at essentials, if we allow for his confusion. He himself has provided us with the key for his affective relationships with people and with life in general in the self-analysis just quoted. We shall refer to his case again in discussing the psychological origins of a psychosis, especially the connection between anal eroticism and paranoia (Freud). Fear of the opposite sex is according to him the basis for his depression, though what we observe is not a genuine instinctual inversion but, as we shall soon see, a sado-masochistic perversion which completely dominates his emotional life. We cannot find out whether his fantasies were only freed by his psychosis. His most noticeable trait today is his paranoiac distrust. He does not trust visitors because they are "probably connected with diplomatic and police matters," which might mean trouble for him if he spoke openly. A pale, blond man, he is usually confined to bed in a single room because of his irritability and is therefore especially unapproachable. When he has finally been induced to talk he qualifies every sentence. He is also very reticent in speaking about his works and prefers to dismiss them as an unimportant waste of time except for his "sadistic life's work."

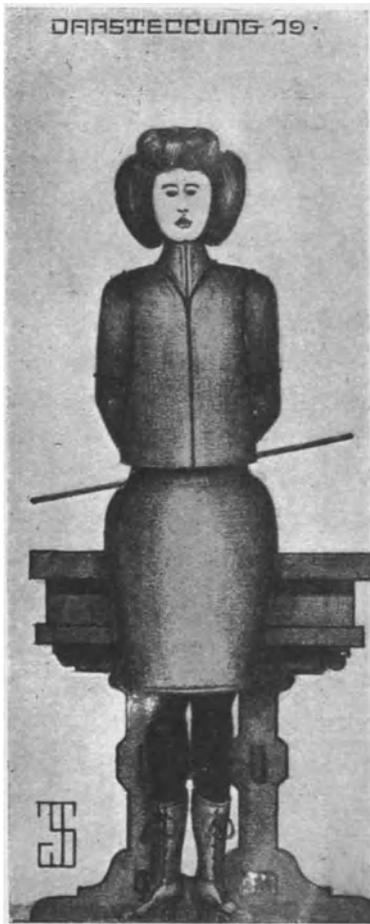
This work consists of a pedantically ordered thick quarto fascicle whose covers, carefully tied up with white and black strings, are in turn decorated with movable flaps and pasted figures. Inside are 20 sections of 10 to 50 leaves each, arranged within paper folders which carry solemn inscriptions in a bizarre printing style. Many lists of the contents of single groups of sheets and of the whole accompany the folders. Each group consists of a series of drawings and considerable text written in pencil in a very even but nonetheless rather illegible script. These writings are mostly tiresome, long-winded descriptions of beatings and lustful "enticement chicaneries" and involve exclusively women, mostly in



Case 180

**Fig. 146.**  
"Prison Chicanery" (Pencil).

17 × 21 cm.



Case 180 **Fig. 147.** 7 × 17 cm.  
Feminine Figure (Pencil).



Case 180 **Fig. 148.** 13 × 19 cm.  
Two Figures (Pencil).

school or prison settings for which he attached complete and detailed architectural plans. Bathrooms, gymnasiums, and toilets with very complicated furnishings and devices play major roles. The “life’s work” originated over many years, in the main probably in the years 1910 to 1914, and, as Sell repeatedly assured us, was a substitute for sexual activity (see his biography).

The drawing “Prison Chicanery Luccas,” Figure 146, is the cover picture of a folder and is most representative of the mixture of sober technical precision in which the architectural draftsman expresses himself, with the horror fantasy of the sadist which may be enriched by hallucinatory experiences. On first glance the picture’s technical sobriety tends to overshadow its really grandiose fantasy. A column in a wall between two Gothic windows develops at the top into a semi-human machine and, rearing up like a crab, grasps a woman’s belt with metal arms, while the windows tilt toward each other. The woman, who has whips in her hands, bends over an urn. Arched lamps swing with the windows to which they are strangely fastened, and a whole bouquet of thrashing instruments is attached to one of them. Had Sell’s execution of the picture not been so lame it would have had more than just a trace of eerie gruesomeness.

Sell concisely symbolizes a flagellation by a solitary figure in Figure 147, and successfully avoids a graphic representation. There are a few dozen of such small drawings,



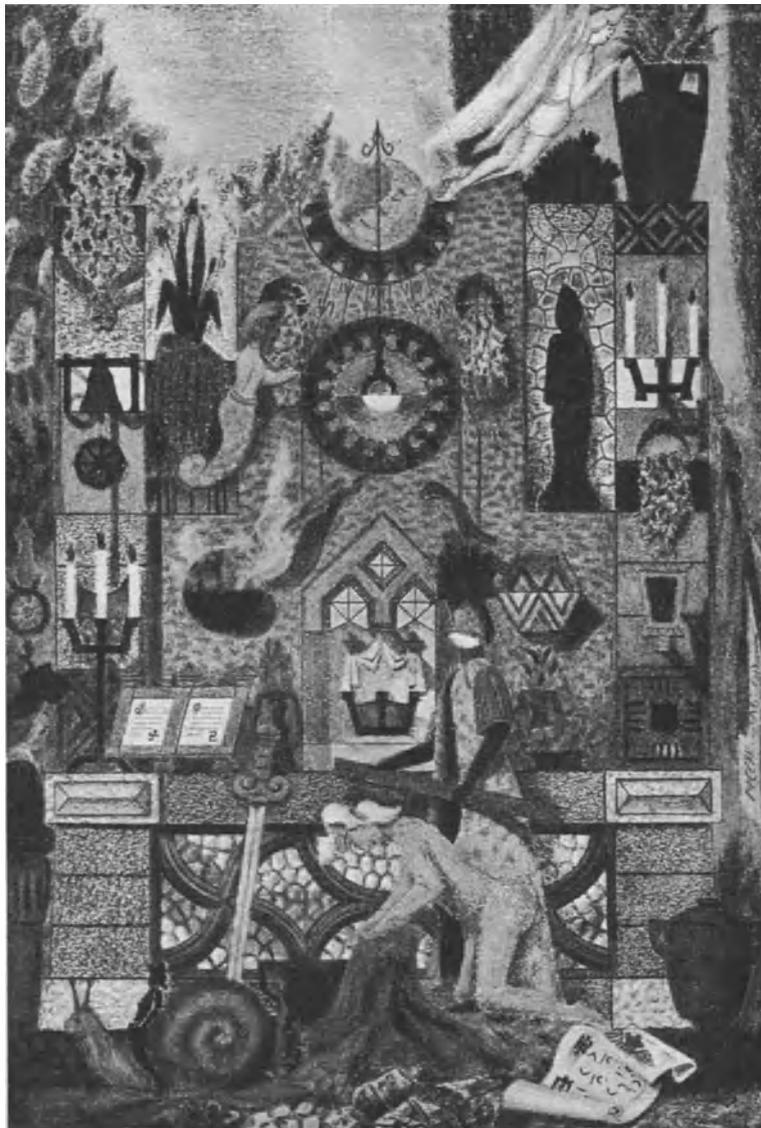
Case 180

**Fig. 149.** Sadistic Motif (Crayon).

Original size.

most of them showing persons spread-eagled or with signs of tortures. Figure 148 shows a woman lacing herself up ritualistically, while on the left another squats on one of the many devices which Sell invents tirelessly for all kinds of horrible purposes. The forceful angular attitudes of the two figures are probably due not so much to Sell's awkwardness, which at first handicapped him in showing figures in space, but rather to his eccentric and intentional pictorial language.

We observe that Sell's artistic abilities also increased during the course of his illness, at least during the first 10 years. Figure 149 is evidence of his progress. He drew this picture during one of the more recent years, whereas the three pictures discussed previously were drawn at the beginning of his stay in the asylum. In full possession of his expressive means, Sell finds a very respectable solution for a very similar theme, that of the sultry, strutting behavior of two "chicanery women" as they are perhaps introduced



Case 180

**Fig. 150.** "Nature Altar" (Crayon).

15 × 22 cm.

to a newcomer who resembles a nun. The background is so crudely colorful as almost to overwhelm the delicate green of the veiled woman's robe.

"The Nature Altar," Figure 150, shows the most sober construction completely overgrown by fantastic and colorful detail. Sell is of the opinion that human sacrifice should be reintroduced, as in ancient times; he says it would be most useful for mankind. He therefore in Figure 150 has a nude woman kneeling for the sacrifice in front of the altar. Behind her stands a female judge or priestess in a fanciful robe with a gigantic, blood-red head ornament. A bowl of incense and a Madonna also glow in blood red. These three red areas dominate the highly colorful variety of plants, vessels, and green spotted stones. At the lower left, however, a deep-red little man rides a large, gray snail – "the little blood man counts the seconds," Sell says laconically – a fairy tale motif which in spite of its ambiguity is horribly graphic within its context of sacrifice.



Case 180      **Fig. 151.** "Universe Inversion" (Crayon).      15 × 22 cm.

Figure 151 has special importance because it illustrates the acute hallucinatory phase of excitement which Sell underwent in the first months of his illness. In 1920 he explained the picture as follows:

That is the crime which has been perpetrated against me – a whole nation hears my voice and knows that I have been here for 13 years. But I cannot go to court and sue about this affair even though I have made well founded appeals dozens of times. The popes have done this kind of thing to others too when someone had done them wrong. Privy Councilor Kraepelin went through the same thing when the strips of skin hung from the cheek at that time; I observed it closely. Below left I am in the bath; it is terrible what one has to undergo there. It was nothing to be experienced, and so that one would not die one was connected with a a whale... The whole crime originated at court, I know that for sure.

Whales?

That is hard to explain, that is simply a matter of support through animals... It has to do with the porous feeding of the universe, every pore is the ass hole of another person. You lie in the bath for five days and an old spoiled meal floats on top, the salad acid enters into the pores, also the orange acid if you get an orange peel on the head – if you spray some on a fly it spins around a few times and dies. The whole universe inverts itself so that the whole outside surface becomes a stomach lining... When one has experienced that, the universe inversion is worse than a dying Christ... Below right a small doll lies wrapped in hemp. That is due to the fact that I was previously influenced to urinate into a water bowl, then the ladies stuck in the unwrapped dolls and then into the vagina... That happened often at that time.

The chain?

It is there to prove that barbed wire ceremonies were held like a calendar in the shower; the polar bear on top is a more theological apparition. It sat in E. at that time in the folds of clothing, wearing kid gloves. It must have been an unfolding of the clothes. I already had such an apparition when I was young. Suddenly a nun sat at the other side of my bed, I did not trust myself to move for fear.

The place?

I was in the clinic there, because of morality, they said... They talk of morality while the shingles on the roof rose because of the crimes... where the ethereal bodies rose through the roof from the experiment... The part on the left is a ship, with an arena inside with cells for collecting the ether torsos – one can also view the whole thing as an eye... whereby higher persons are protected... That is how animals were used to protect me, that I had to live...

Up above in the air is Pope Leo XIII. He appeared to me theologically. I had to support him because he had the same symptoms, the universe inversion and such things... He drove through the clouds, I am in the shade beside him, harrassing him theologically. The small blue figures are all monarchs, I did not want to be too precise about them, it is only a notation and also appeared to me. The sun is also only a notation because one has to support it, because it is the prince of sexual matters. The small figures show the affair that one must now go into the water, now into the fire and feels the electric wheel tours... The ball represents the world, also only as notation...



Case 180

**Fig. 152.**  
"Sun Dragon" (Crayon).

14 × 22 cm.

In coming to grips with the picture's composition we have to assume that Sell knew by and large what he wanted to represent when he began to draw. We assume that he began with the shower in the cave because it is at the center of his recollections of the times of physical pain, and that he simply added the other scenes arbitrarily. At the same time, as he approached the upper part of the picture, the professional draftsman within him may have become increasingly alive and then took pains to bring the whole to a good culmination.

We are immediately inclined to think of a hallucination as inspiration for "The Sun Dragon," Figure 152, but Sell calmly denies it. Indeed, he himself says that "it might look as if a hallucination was painted, but that is not the case; rather, the woman is painted red the same as I sometimes paint one blue or green." The denial is meaningless because it can be true as well as false. This drawing undoubtedly makes an especially strong schizophrenic impression. A rainbow flashes down like lightning from a giant bean upon a woman who lights up blood red or in flames while simultaneously sinking down with a horrified expression. A strange eagle is at her feet. The rainbow is mirrored in abbreviated bands on the lawn which quickly narrow in perspective. A modest and painsta-



Case 180

**Fig. 154.** "Motivated Representation of God" (Crayon).

Original size.

kingly executed tiny factory is in the background. All elements have the loose, pointless relationships with each other which we have always found especially characteristic of schizophrenics, but they also have, especially in the strongly colored original, the charm, if not the quality, of conviction that appeals to us despite the strangeness, at least in the major motifs. The townscape in Figure 153 – which with its high views into narrow streets in which tiny stylized figures move, reminds us of many drawings by Ensor and Kubin – is more approachable. Looking at the houses we again see the really quite sterile illustrator at odds with his schizophrenic, playful impulses.

Recently Sell shows a definite tendency to turn away from the representation of real objects and toward more and more abstract forms which are partly ornamental recollections from his youth or variations of them, and partly highly original creations. Figure 154 makes the strangest impression. He calls this small picture “Motivated Representation of God,” and at another time combined its motif with a most realistic devil. Sell’s explanation follows. “That is God who looks like an ape with a crimson cap; at the right is his crystal eye with which he looks into the universe; below is his hind eye with which he looks at the earth.” Sell calls the yellow object in the lower right corner, which is reminiscent of a strawberry, a lamp like that hanging from the ceiling in his room. He very indifferently denies it any phallic meaning. Figure 155 offers an example of his abstract fantasies in which ornaments, tectonic objects like candelabra, butterflies, etc., are at least hinted at but aimlessly tumbled together. Most of the parts are pasted on. The drawing is called “Next World Resurrection Myriad.” Lately Sell has primarily made



Case 180 **Fig. 153.** Townscape (Crayon). 16 × 21 cm.

glaring color displays of the same sort; some have a certain charm while others are rather lame and foolish.

We are primarily intrigued by the content of these pictures. Sell's pictorial abilities are so determined by his architectural past that we are almost never allowed to forget it, and the question of configuration is therefore less interesting. Of course, psychotic experiences also enrich his work. Ten years after his admission he drew a succession of strongly colored pictures in crayon, which were perhaps influenced by hallucinations and which have great artistic qualities. Finally he turned to abstract color compositions, and again succeeded in producing some remarkable works. These warrant especially close analysis and comparison with the corresponding attempts by serious abstract artists because of their crass mixture of sober, traditional formal motifs with a decided tendency to a completely capricious bogus order. We shall then easily discover that even very free unobjective painting is much more closely related to traditional art than to Sell's crude but colorful play. Only by such comparisons, which call our attention to the inner rhythm of lines and to the harmony of colors, can we separate quality, defined as free traditionalism, from more or less barbaric arbitrariness, even if superficial similarities are at first confusing. This is not to say that from another point of view we may not take the uninhibited arbitrary product as a direct expression of psychic values more seriously than many a "serious" work whose sole distinction may be its virtuosity.



Case 180

**Fig. 155.** "Next World Resurrection Myriads" (Crayon).

11 × 27 cm.

## 10. Franz Pohl

Franz Pohl, a locksmith born in 1864 on the upper Rhine, comes from a family in which mental illness had not occurred previously. His paternal grandfather is described as overly irritable, his father, also a locksmith, on the contrary as rather calm, polite, and very dependable. The father had also acquired an unusual amount of culture for a relatively uneducated man. Pohl's mother died early. We know nothing at all about Pohl's youth. He attended elementary and middle schools and the industrial schools in Munich and Karlsruhe. During the years 1893 to 1897 he was employed as a teacher in an industrial arts school and also visited the world's fair in Chicago for six weeks. He is supposed to have been released from his teaching post because of his highly eccentric behavior, but unfortunately we do not know the exact circumstances. In 1898, however, a relative stated that Pohl had heard voices as early as the age of 16. He was intelligent and talented, lively and energetic, but so overbearing and belligerent that he made enemies of everyone he met. In Chicago he fell in with a circle of spiritualists and afterward wrote much in their style. Among his visions, of which others learned, there were for instance two heads which looked into his eyes and a woman's head which connected itself very closely to him and was absorbed by him.

During 1897 and 1898 Pohl lived in Hamburg, did not work, and spent a great deal of money, especially on the theater and bordellos. In 1894 he had passed through a siege of illness and, according to one statement, also had had gonorrhoea. A few reports emphasize his strong sexual needs. During the winter of 1897 and 1898 his paranoia increased rapidly. He related to himself whatever he heard in the theater, and understood "he is crazy" when a trolley conductor had really called out "ready." He heard abuse everywhere, and people threatened him and listened in on him through the keyhole so that he had to change his apartment. In a fit of fear he swam across a canal in the winter and was therefore admitted for a few days to an asylum. Then he went home and on the way stuck his tongue out at the train master because, he claimed, the train master had done the same to him. He does not seem to have been able to stay home for long because in March 1898 we find him already referred from a Swiss asylum to one at home, and in May he was actually transferred.

His paranoia, which soon included the physicians, orderlies and patients of the new institution, dominated his illness. Pohl also hallucinated much, reportedly only in his hearing and taste, and not visually. Often he ate little because he feared poison. Even though he did not consider himself ill and was often agitated, he nevertheless adapted to the institution and could be held without difficulty in the minimum security section. He was always orderly, occupied himself with designs for locks, and wrote letters which, however, quickly diminished in meaning and in a short time became almost incomprehensible. His language also quickly became more confused and his whole personality weaker, so that soon we had to speak of dementia.

As early as 1900 his behavior corresponded to what we now call the final schizophrenic phase. Pohl, a small man with a relatively large head, black hair and beard, and darkly glowing eyes, moved about calmly but in a very mannered way, spoke slowly, clearly, affectedly, and with a friendly smile and amicable gestures – however, no one could understand much. A few of his mystical ideas are reported from that time. During his dreams some persons exert pressure on his head, and the dreams are then dependent on the persons – they originate with persons whose consciences are troubled; in dreaming one is further removed from great crowds. We know of no other statements by Pohl. As for the rest there exist only short notations about his external behavior and what he himself wrote on his drawings, especially on their versos. As we might expect after the brief description of his behavior around 1900 these writings offer little information about his psychic state. At the beginning there are sometimes still comprehensible sentences containing his desires, communications, and general speculations, but as early as 1903 and 1904 we can hardly find a coherent sentence fragment. Instead we observe an increasing and limitless urge to systematize. Most of what Pohl writes is pressed into some scheme or other, such as the following:

I. Dissolution of state M  
 II. Stopping s Dem.  
 III. Victim h soz.  
 N IV. Index externally send away P.  
 III. well unified story  
 II. enjoyment moves geogr.  
 I. satisf. need language  
 God O. Calm World Citizen +

Three examples of seemingly coherent prose may document Pohl's method of expression at various times.

In 1900 he wrote, "During the stay of those present in demand for stay in the front room after breakfast the completed harmful preparation of the floor of the day room proceeds continued with zink splinters etc." The next passage was written perhaps in 1904: "The dissolved order receives general advantages. Woman spared; here the master guarded the children. He wrote: Backward steps are forming out of the family which psychomania = shit entitled created from stays is life over which to me was spared, when improvable, the sender's reaction would be carried by." Finally we quote this passage dated 1919: "The best further letting off looking fore ak childish mass peace weighty free after whining away head decapitated, raising offered to the 9th stomach turn noises bidden."

Judging by the paper and the writing method (watercolor brush) the following verses date to an early time, perhaps 1901; in them Pohl carries the association of rhyming words quite far while simultaneously disregarding their meanings, yet the charm of the sounds is not completely negated by the resulting vulgarities and absurdities:

Feen, fegen  
 meiden neigen sich im Reigen  
 sehen drehen weiden neiden sich  
 gehen stehen reiten schreiten um Alles  
 wehenden Höhen entklommen  
 scheidenden Leiden herkommen

Fairies, brushing  
 avoid, bend in the dance  
 see turn enjoy envy  
 go stand ride stride around all  
 escaped from waving heights  
 departing sufferings come here

Weihgeschmückte irdische Leiber wähen  
tückische windige findige Weibertränen  
tanzenden Reigen summend Geheul  
zitternder Gräser schmachsender Düfte  
steigen umschlossen den paarenden Trieben  
In uns empor ein Odem des Lieben.

consecrated earthly bodies guess  
tricky clever smart women's tears  
dancing round humming howl  
trembling grasses pining odors  
climb embracing the pairing urges  
Up within us a breath of love.

During the 22 years of his stay in the asylum Pohl consistently developed along the direction which he had apparently entered on earlier. His autism did not result from battles with his environment and with hallucinations; instead he slid ever more deeply into it. He hardly experienced states of excitement as such. Very seldom does his medical history note that he is irritable or momentarily violent against fellow patients who tease him. The short answers which he made to questions became ever more confused and distracted, like his notations.

A conversation with him is of course no longer possible. Even the stimulus of a visit from the outside, which would produce some little sign of vitality in many other patients in their terminal stages, no longer works with him. Pohl looked distrustfully at us with his lively, mousey eyes and cleverly tried to thwart our desire to view his pictures by constantly finding new reasons to postpone untying the strings of the newspaper bundle containing his treasures. He would murmur something about "unready things," turn the bundle from side to side, or run to the window and signal outside. At the sight of a physician he withdrew to a corner with a warning call to us and followed the physician's movements from there with a fascinated expression and magically conjuring gestures accompanied by steady mumbling. Afterward he checked the door meticulously, listened for a long time in all directions – and again began to turn the bundle over while shrugging his shoulders thoughtfully and casting shy glances to the side without ever responding to the words addressed to him. When he had finally loosened the string and taken out a sheet he suddenly reached for his head as if in recognition, repacked the bundle carefully and began to search in his vest pockets while declining to answer all questions with small gestures of the hands. From the small package wrapped in newspaper which he finally found, he took a cigarette butt which he looked at lovingly, sniffed, and lit thoughtfully. Then he walked back and forth with dignified short steps, always bidding the visitor to be quiet with small motions of the hands and a clever and sly expression. After he had smoked perhaps a third of the butt he carefully stubbed it out, painstakingly wrapped it up again, put it into his vest pocket, and returned to the table with a friendly smile. After a prolonged struggle with such whims we finally succeeded in seeing a few drawings but we could not start a conversation. Only when we found a picture beautiful in color or form did Pohl answer, as painters usually do, "yes, that's quite good," "there should be more red in it," etc. All of his most recent pictures were done on newsprint with hard crayons; in contrast he had used drawing paper only for noting down oracular sentence fragments and neologisms.

Pohl was distinguished by the fact that he was a professionally trained draftsman at the time he withdrew from the world. He was a finished artisan at least in the technical sense and had already taught for some years at an industrial arts school. This fact compensates a little for the sad lack of information about his psychic constitution and the experiences which contributed to his later view of the world during the development of his illness. As it is we can only surmise that view from his pictures. About Pohl's personality prior to his admission to the asylum – his illness probably began quietly as long ago

as his sixteenth year – we can say only this, that he was a talented, quiet, willful man who, judging by his writing and vocabulary, had acquired a certain amount of knowledge and who was rather expansive, at least in erotic matters. His trip to Chicago indicates an adventurous spirit. His relationship with his father – his mother died as early as 1886 – seems to have been completely neutral, a common occurrence with hebephrenics. As for the rest we were totally dependent on his very numerous pictures.

Fortunately Pohl is pedantic enough to put a date on most of his drawings. Not that he signs them formally, but in the accompanying texts there is almost always some hint of a date, whether in a decree he hands down or in an invoice he prepares. His development during his illness can therefore be traced step by step over more than 20 years. Pohl therefore is doubly distinguished from all the other cases we discuss at length: first, he gained an average degree of pictorial skill in the normal way (the fact that he was already in the beginnings of his illness at the time probably does not affect the validity of our investigation because we found a number of drawings from his first years in the asylum which are dominated by textbook skills), and, secondly, although his drawing method remained the same, we can prove a change which cannot be called a progressive deterioration into imbecility.

There are only two possible explanations for such a change. We must keep in mind that a trained draftsman will generally make progress by continuous practice if he has any talent at all. Pohl, as we know, was subject to a creeping psychosis which turned him slowly, without any violent phases, into the bizarrely confused man who today dozes away in complete autism. It might still be conceivable that drawing skills, being less central to the personality of a craftsman than that of an artist, can function simply as a skill or technique and therefore could, if need be, be maintained more or less independently of the psychotic change in Pohl's outlook. Craftsmen often do their work quite well even in the final schizophrenic stages. We would then notice – perhaps with some astonishment – that a psychosis does not destroy a man's abilities but may even reinforce his technical skills. On the other hand, we could from the very beginning view every change in his drawing method as caused by the illness, *i. e.* we could be theoretically certain of the effects of illness on drawing. However, we have no objective information how the phases of the illness, *e. g.* excitement, mirror themselves in pictures, nor can we establish beforehand whether a psychosis necessarily has a degenerating effect on a person's ability to draw, as many psychiatrists have hitherto believed, or, for that matter, whether the illness could in some way have a favorable, liberating, or deepening effect on the work. What we are trying to say is simply that we cannot draw clear conclusions from this case any more than from the others, even though we face a change in the method of drawing during the progress of the illness. We must try to find at least two components in every drawing, *viz.*, on the one hand, the acquired skill which can be either developing or decaying, and on the other, the mysterious unknown element of the ill personality which can show its effects not only in the content but in the configuration of a picture. Perhaps we will be aided in assessing these components accurately by the fact that in a number of cases we have already become acquainted with these effects.

A few dozen drawings are extant from the first years of Pohl's stay in the asylum which are completely realistic and for which the institution itself provides the motifs. Fellow patients and small scenes are portrayed; several persons appear to be especially favored and are modeled in numerous different poses. Nothing except the strange inscriptions reveals that extraordinary psychic events are taking place within the artist. Drawing is just another activity for Pohl, like eating or sleeping. It is not intended to

express his present life but rather the past. His new outlook enters only into his verbal statements which are already completely and autistically confused. It is as though his relationship to the world has already been dissolved internally but continues to function as usual in the objective sphere as automatic perception and reproduction, like an organ which survives death. Figure 156, dated 1900, represents this stage well: it includes a study of a head; some purely objective studies of physical attitudes done with a loose, indifferent stroke; and a shaving scene stylized like the book decorations of the time, including a wiry doubling of the outlines and sober, flat shading. The group is well constructed and may serve as a measure of Pohl's natural talent and skill.

Beginning with 1904 we have dated drawings of various kinds. Realistic scenes still occur, but with differences in the strokes and arrangements. Also, like Figure 157, they



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**Fig. 156.** Sketches 1900 (Pencil and crayon).

34 × 21 cm.



Case 244

**Fig. 157.**  
Sketch 1904 (Pencil and crayon).

18 × 13 cm.

exude a certain mood which is hard to pin down, despite their clear objectivity. At the same time Pohl already made drawings for which the actual model provided merely the stimulus while the pictures as such combine colors and forms into new organisms. Such pictures are dominated by affective qualities. Pohl used hard crayons from which he also gained an effect of pure painting. Sometimes, as in drawing the asylum's interior, Figure 157, he mixes pencil, crayon, and ink very effectively. His technical sketches from those years also show a similar evolution from craftsmanlike sobriety to a lively, energetic stroke. Pohl has always been especially effective in these sketches, which are closely tied to locksmith designs. But drawings like Figure 158, in which a stream of wild impulses seems to be subdued into even curves only by the greatest effort, do not occur earlier. Their dynamism at least can most probably be attributed to schizophrenic changes.



Case 244 **Fig. 158.** Decorative Design (Pencil). 25 × 39 cm.



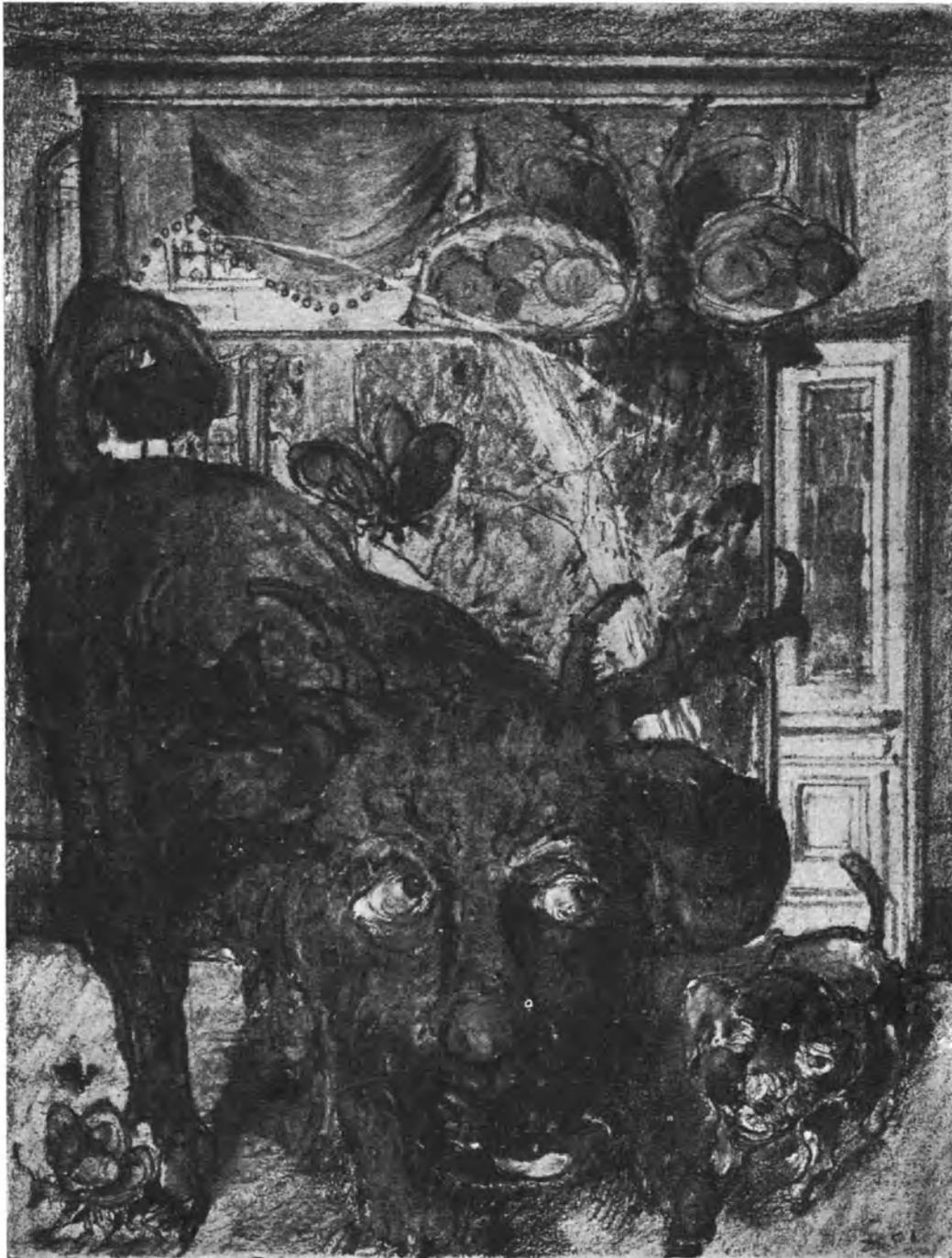
Case 244

**Fig. 159.**  
Fantastic Drawing (Pencil).

25 × 39 cm.

The vivid pencil drawing in Figure 159, which reveals Pohl's fund of extraordinary experiences, probably dates to the same time. Although we cannot prove that the drawing originated in hallucinations, a comparison with the other drawings which we attribute to hallucinations makes us almost certain that it did. The meaning of the suspended figure with the Russian face may perhaps be this: the framed head which hung on the wall as a portrait has left its nail, been completed into a whole figure by a magically conjured body, and now flies through the room – carrying a sword in order to separate head and body again at any moment. The pots, rapidly retreating in perspective, and the strange mythical animal, half tapir and half dolphin, which, startlingly foreshortened, also presses diagonally forward out of the deep and sniffs at the foremost dish with a turned-up nose – these motifs only increase the dizzyingly fantastic impression which we can most likely explain by referring to dream faces.

Pohl made one other picture which we must surely understand as a representation of a hallucination, Figure 160. A hallucination is all the more certain in this case because the background represents a very realistically intended passage to the garden, with the door open, and strongly resembles a room of the asylum. A plump monster, combining



Case 244

**Fig. 160.** Fabulous Animals (Crayon).

29 × 40 cm.



Case 244

**Fig. 161.** Madonna with Crows (Crayon).

29 × 40 cm.

perhaps a dog, a boar, a man, and a deer, stands threateningly near as if it were thrusting its head out of the picture. Beside it is a peculiar, small dog with dull eyes in its thick head. A gigantic butterfly is also painfully near and lowers itself down from above, and two smaller ones appear on both sides of the monster. The awkward, crude, depressing qualities of the picture, whose color, a glaring red, is also unusually brutal, can be explained satisfactorily only as hallucinatory.

The five pictures we have just discussed are intended only as a foil so that the works from Pohl's "totally imbecile terminal stage" of the last years may be given their just due. "The Madonna with the Crows," Figure 161, shows how natural and free his work now is and how rich his expressive means have become. The old motif seems rather surprising in the rough leafless forest through whose branches a flock of crows flutters. Many viewers will already be tempted to see something very wrong. The question is moot. Like some artists we believe Pohl's idea to be enviably original and, what is more, admirably executed, because the picture is convincing and gains vitality every time we look at it. The slim Madonna also has great charm. As for the formal details, we can easily view any part of the picture in isolation without stumbling over lame strokes. Is it possible to find traces of illness anywhere? We believe that if the picture were exhibited in a neutral place no viewer would be moved to solicit a medical opinion about its author, though he might be surprised by the way in which the Madonna is set into the picture and consider the painter an untraditional eccentric. With that reservation most people, depending on their receptivity for it, would enjoy the picture as a work of art.

We cannot say the same of all of Pohl's recent works by any means. Everyone would surely be highly alienated by the incomparably split impression made, for instance, by the large colored drawing reproduced in Figure 162. We are charmed by its small Gothic tabernacle, but it consists of rococo forms. Next to it a bent-over man slinks forward as if he wants to catch the delightful little brown dog or teddy bear like a butterfly. In back the view is to the outside through a vast, disorderly assemblage of classic architecture crowned on the left by groups of embracing cherubs. The drawing is done with a very lively, loose, and yet precise stroke, like that of a master – yet somehow the viewer's mind is boggled. The assured objectivity with which this confused conglomerate of completely unconnected details is represented is dizzying and reminiscent of the effects produced by E. T. A. Hoffmann, who deliberately leaves us in doubt as to whether he intends reality or a dream world. No matter whether hallucinations or dreams are responsible for Pohl's picture, it embodies on the highest artistic level the typical schizophrenic state of mind which could equally well be represented by an incoherent string of words. This string of words, following a schizophrenic pattern, might run as follows: tabernacle – Teddy – butterfly – bent man – rogothic – cherub ball, Hellas door, etc. What is important is that artistic configuration can draw on such material as easily as on any other, but that the results clearly show two features, namely, first, the incoherent material or the schizophrenic attitude which tends to split any whole into independent details, and secondly the sure configurative power.

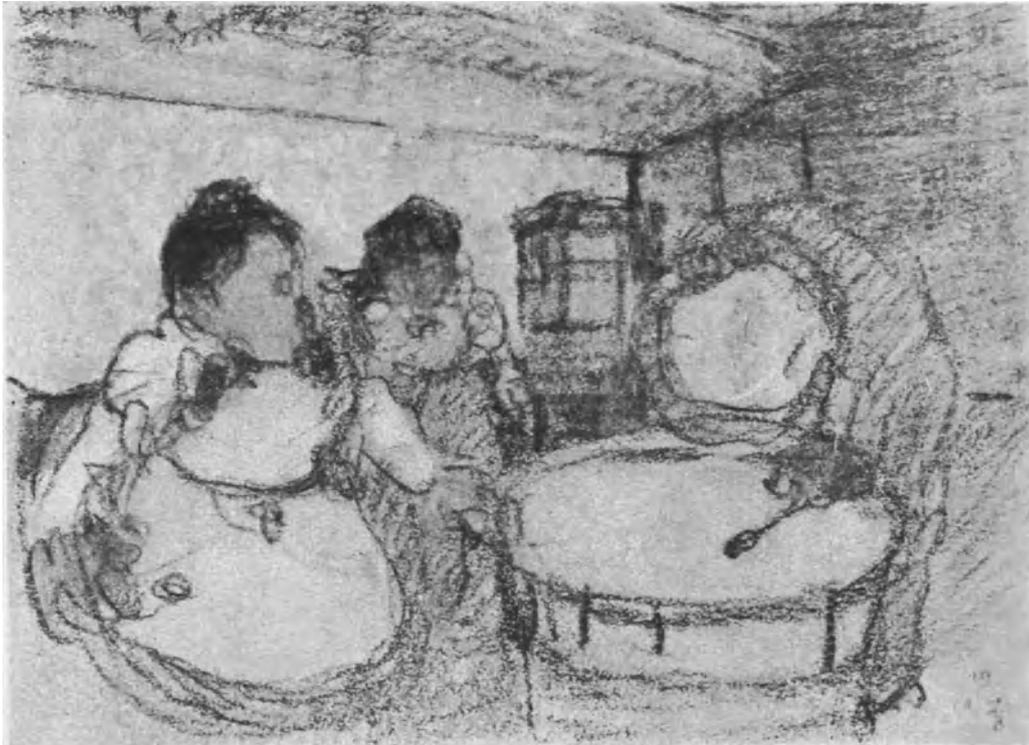
Sometimes, however, the fantastic intermediate realm into which Pohl knows how to lead us coalesces into completely unified works, as in Figure 163, in which three oddly shaped gnomes are depicted so naturally in surroundings which suit them that to our knowledge no artist has succeeded more convincingly with any similar motif. The uncertainty of the outlines must not be confused with the vagueness of playful scribbles which are interpreted subsequently. In this blue crayon drawing we are dealing with a masterly loosening of form combined with a completely clear conception and a sure hand. The



Case 244

**Fig. 162.** Fantastic Scene (Crayon).

29 × 40 cm.



Case 244

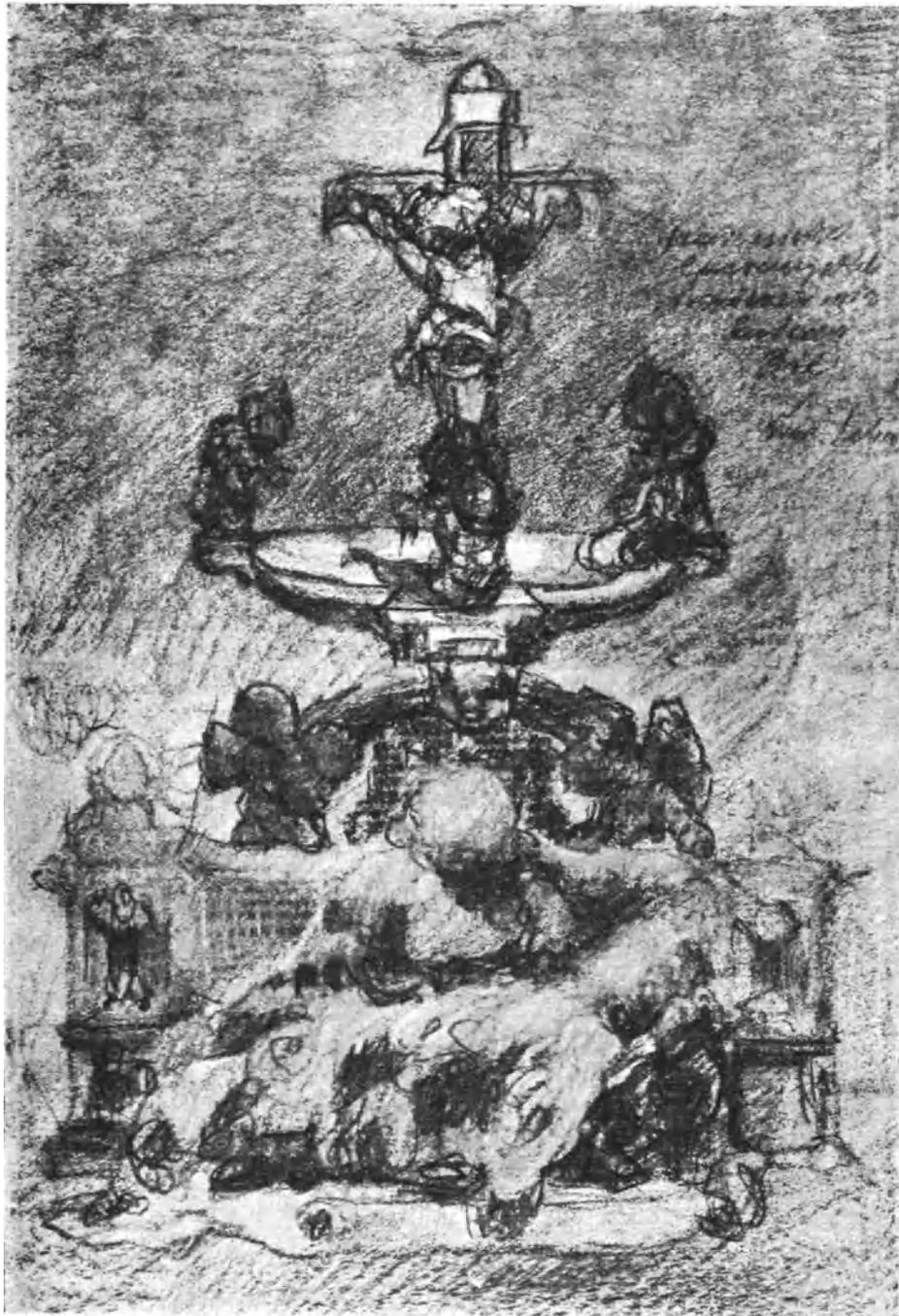
**Fig. 163.** Dwarfs (Crayon).

19 × 14 cm.

technical designs which Pohl never neglects to draw now also show the generous painterly softness which no longer requires detail and yet has such a suggestive effect that we grasp the tectonic organism much more intimately than in an exact technical drawing. Figure 164, a design for a fountain, speaks for itself.

Pohl reaches the pinnacle of his achievement in his last pictures. In the course of the years he made quite a number of self-portraits. Usually he depicts just his head leaning slightly forward, with round, lively, and curious eyes. For a while, when he favored busy combinations of half-decorative, half-realistic motifs, his head would occasionally appear in the midst of a cloudy dance of cherubs, for example. Figure 165 belongs to Pohl's last creative or, more correctly, his most creative period, which occurred in 1918. Its strokes are quite loose but pregnant, and the colors, which are primarily blue, with a dull light brown in the face, are blunt. What strikes us is the head's attitude and expression. We are forced to think of van Gogh's late self-portrait, the only other picture in which we meet a man looking out at us with such burning tension, whose view of life seems to be so inconsolably destroyed at the same time. For once, when we are dealing with an expert, we are allowed to speak unqualifiedly of art in the fullest sense of the word, of the pictorial confession of an artist who has long used speech only for confused games.

The dull green landscape containing some figures (Figure 166), which probably originated somewhat earlier, delights the connoisseur by its soft, elegant tone and the colorful luster, *i. e.*, by purely material qualities, even before he looks at its content. Even though we are reminded of old masters, we would be hard put to name any particular one as a model. The impression of age nevertheless deepens as we try to analyze the details.



Case 244

**Fig. 164.** Crucifix Fountain (Pencil and crayon).

18 × 27 cm.



Case 244

**Fig. 165.** Self-portrait (Crayon).

19 × 28 cm.

A crucifix projects into the air from among the scattered trees, and people in outmoded dress who blend into the lifeless green of the meadow sit or wander about in peculiarly stiff and manikinlike poses. Below them stands the stone monument of a knight who is no less alive than the people, one of whom is recognizable as a French cuirassier with wide red trousers. A mild evening sky is visible through the high leafless branches. We look into a world in which familiar things have become inconceivably distant and alien. By submerging ourselves in this picture we can, speaking psychopathologically, understand the experience of alienation from the objective world so convincingly that nothing can equal it. We shall never know whether Pohl consciously intended to show us such an experience in the picture, but this lack of knowledge is unimportant beside the fact that for once the phenomenon of alienation becomes directly accessible.

Finally we have "The Avenging Angel," Figure 167 (the title picture), in which all the valuable intensifying impulses of the schizophrenic mind reach their peak. The angel in its shining crown of light rays breaks into the picture from above and extends his left arm with its long claws while holding a sword with his right hand almost thoughtfully across his face. His left foot, between his hands, stands on the throat of a man who grasps his own neck with his right hand while his left tries to deflect the attacker. At the right edge the victim kicks up his legs which are twisted and seen from the back. Pohl has composed the confusion of limbs in this confined and horrifyingly graphic picture masterfully; there is in fact something grandiose about the way in which the dynamics of movement have been so ordered that we gain a clear overview without at the same time losing the feeling of colossal tension. The high standard of composition is matched by the colors. Pohl rallies the whole gamut to do the motif justice, using glaring reds, green, and blue, yet their extreme contrasts are reconciled by yellow-green halftones which darken toward the edges. The colors also parallel the tension of the forms and show the same sovereign mastery. It is certainly not blasphemous to speak of Grünewald and Dürer in relation to this work. All the features we found characteristic in analyzing Pohl's work are mirrored in this, his masterpiece. The locksmith's art is reflected in the angel's crown of rays for which Pohl found a most effective technical trick: wavy lines pressed into the paper with a hard point in the direction of the rays. The convincing force of horror of the hallucinatory pictures dominates this picture. A certain natural simplicity adds a trace of plainness suggesting in turn the old masters, in spite of all the heightened tensions in form and color.

What is schizophrenic about this picture? We cannot be certain but once again must face the moment when we have to declare that if this avenging angel could emerge only from schizophrenic emotions, no cultivated man can continue to explain schizophrenic change merely as pathologic deterioration. Instead we have to make up our minds once and for all to count on a separate creative component and to look for the value of a work only within the work itself – even if it is that of a schizophrenic.



Case 244

**Fig. 166.** Strange Landscape (Crayon).

29 × 40 cm.

## RESULTS AND PROBLEMS

## *I. Summary of the Observations Made in the Pictures Themselves*

### 1. Characteristics of the Scribblings and the Simplest Drawings

Spread out in front of us are 170 pictures by mentally ill persons, which we have variously analyzed and attributed to the impulses of a creative urge. A hasty survey suggests that despite their great diversity all the pictures convey a common fundamental quality; they make an impression which, being affective, is hard to put into words. We may perhaps come close to this distinctive, fascinating strangeness – to use the most general expression – along these lines: in a sense the pictures demand to exist as independent creations according to their own laws. They have an arbitrariness otherwise foreign to us and refer to experiences which remain sinister to us even though we are familiar with the sinister elements of artistic fantasy. We shall not attempt to analyze details on the basis of our overall impression but prefer to generalize cautiously from the material.

It would be most important if we could find features in the simplest scribblings which were certain to take us beyond the confines of normality, but we must admit that repeated attempts have yielded no unimpeachable results. As we mentioned in this book's theoretical section the fault lies partly in the almost total absence of usable research about the concrete manifestations of the most basic and simplest expressive gestures, and partly in the complete lack of comparable scribbles from healthy adults. There is also very little material from children at this level. We have to go back to children between the ages of two and four to find such scribblings. These are usually distinguished from our material by their lines, which are drawn out hesitatingly and uncertainly across the whole sheet or formed into intricately intertwined knots. The small mutilated form elements take a secondary role – perhaps because they are derived from letters and numerals unknown to the children. Any attempt at representation is surely inspired in children by adults. To a child scribbling is a game of movement, and nothing could be further from his mind than the possibility that it could actually be made to represent something. On the other hand, an ordering tendency, by which all lines are made to follow a main direction or loops are repeated, appears spontaneously.

The awkwardness and lack of discipline in the lineation of our scribblings in no sense allow us to find their origin in any pathological conditions in their authors. They simply indicate an unpracticed hand and a lack of elementary formal intention, which is also

expressed in the handwriting of persons who are not used to writing. A clear understanding of the expressive content of these features could be gained only by a comparison of our scribblings with a large number done by healthy adults. Theoretically we would expect that important differences would be found but that extreme states of exhaustion would again wipe out the differences, just as handwriting would become very slipshod during exhaustion. Even the noticeable emptiness of scribblings by healthy adults would have to be judged by the same standards. The fact that we can always recognize the scribbles of persons known to us and distinguish them from those of strangers should inspire us to investigate these trifles further because it should be possible to show the personal element in linear rhythm.

We are on firmer ground as soon as major composing tendencies take effect. There can certainly be no formal arrangement which should not be taken seriously and – apart from any artistic value judgment – recognized as normal expressiveness. Just the same, a few traits shown in our material strike us as strange because quantitatively they exceed the familiar. A simple row of windows or doors, for example, may be continued with unlimited pedantry, a motif may be reduced to absurdity without being subjected to some higher formal purpose. A rigid logic, unregulated by other impulses and not moderated soon enough, preponderates and therefore fails to make any meaningful point. Every formal order normally requires some kind of convincing unity to which the details subordinate themselves without losing their own integrity. Our material instead often shows a crass discrepancy between unity and integrity. On the one hand, a rule is exaggerated into pedantic absurdity; on the other, an alienating arbitrariness appears in individual elements or in their most basic interrelationships which refuse to submit to the overall form and instead proliferate throughout the system with sober logic.

The richer ornamental drawings frequently show a tendency to luxuriant growth. Their undeniable charm is due to nothing more than the uniform rhythm of the strokes which is not subject to any rational aim but develops freely across a whole drawing. It contains the genuine vitality so easily throttled by convention and training, which thrives only in a complete absence of inhibitions. Such drawings therefore appear justly as the bearers of genuine artistic values. They have a quality, generally lacking in common stylized art, which we admire in many pictures by neophytes, whether children or primitives, namely the uniform vitality of a rhythm which is an expression of impulsiveness unhampered by reflection.

In talking about the copying tendency we are impressed by great carelessness in the choices of motifs. No representative relationships are intended; instead whatever rises into consciousness in free association is unconcernedly retained. Nor are natural relationships binding; in fact, fragments which are never seen in isolation in the outside world (individual parts of the human body, for instance) are favored. This isolation does seem to be a distinguishing characteristic because healthy children and adults do respect natural relationships and the integrity of organisms in their drawings – at least as long as they draw real objects. On the other hand, we often see such formal fragments in drawings by convicts on prison walls and in tattoos because psychologically their authors are not concerned with representation but with picture writing of the kind closely related to the hieroglyphics of early cultures and primitives. Later we shall return to this point.

We must also be careful not to evaluate technical awkwardness or juvenile conceptions as pathological. Two series of drawings done in various prisons<sup>29</sup> prove conclusively that

<sup>29</sup> Prof. Többen of Münster, was kind enough to have a whole series made for us; another was given us by Rev. Bertsch of Ludwigsburg.

an untrained adult who is not mentally ill also draws completely “childishly,” and this fact is demonstrated even more convincingly by a great series of drawings made by Hungarian illiterates during their military service, *i. e.*, between the ages of 20 and 30.<sup>30</sup> Let us note only the major characteristics of childish drawings, the mixture of front and side views in the representations of persons, the “transparencies” of overlapping forms, etc. All these expressions are completely misleading because they do not describe the psychic process taking place within the child but rather “explain” the variations from the conventional eidetic image of the adult. The absence of any attempt at perspective, of a uniform scale and an objective uniform point of view, are of course also relevant.

Rather more applicable is another quality which we note in numerous scribbles and simple drawings, namely the tendency to fill in each area so that no spot remains empty. In aimless scribbles or ornamental patterns this tendency may share in the configurative tendencies, but it contradicts completely the essence of representation which aims at individualization, or at least at a clear emphasis on the intended objects. The natural urge for clearness and simplicity is contradicted by the tendency to cover the sheet from one edge to the other with motifs like a carpet, to produce profusion. We have not been able to determine empirically whether the *horror vacui* must be taken literally as anxiety in the face of empty spaces or whether we are speaking simply of an uninhibited urge to spill out playfully traces of one’s own experiences. Perhaps we shall yet discover testimony on this subject.

In any case we are reminded again of the hieroglyphic character of many such drawings. The drawer is not really concerned so much with picturing the represented objects as with realizing for himself the special meaning they hold for him. His attitude is very different from that of a naturalist whose desire to lose himself in the beauty of the world and to capture of it what he can is stimulated by its rich external luster. Our drawer is closer to the writer who puts down observations about himself and lazily circumscribes his ideas. Whereas the latter might write, “When I call to mind how Schmidt the neighbor stood at the anvil, his pipe in his mouth, and hammered his horseshoes,” the former instead draws, as in Figure 37, an anvil, a pipe, a horseshoe, pliers and nails, and whatever else comes to mind in free association. The drawer retains the connecting sense, the meaning, for himself. The picture renders only the substantive words. And that gives us both the similarities with and differences from other kinds of picture writing: the latter, whether those of ancient Egypt, Indians, or modern criminals (thieves’ marks), always depend on convention. They are constructed on fixed concepts and every sign has its particular range of meaning which is familiar to the initiated. But our drawer creates an autistic picture writing to which only he has the key. To use a clinical symptom, he invents symbolic neologisms.

If we now arrange the characteristics found in the simplest drawings according to their diagnostic values we must exclude the traits of the unskilled drawer, namely awkwardness, uncertainty, lack of discipline in the strokes, and childish representations of real objects, as well as the positive configurative tendencies which appear primarily in the uniformly vital rhythm of many ornamental drawings. On the other hand we are permitted with some critical caution to view the following as suspiciously pathological: any irregular mixtures of lines, letters, numerals, and representative fragments (although we should note that parallel lines are not infrequently found on telephone pads); the

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<sup>30</sup> For these we are grateful to Prof. Nagy of Budapest, while the collections of Levenstein were not available to us because we were able to discover where he lived only after the book had been completed.

pointless logic, subordinated to no unity, with which a motif, be it a form element or an ordering rule, is executed; an accumulation of form fragments, especially if they are found to fill all the available spaces pedantically and the suggestion of secret picture writing. We cannot emphasize enough that each of these characteristics is of course present in countless works of serious art. We can therefore never speak of them as physical symptoms, *e.g.* the result of reflex actions. Every conceivable absurdity can be absorbed by the overall effect of a work, and that is all that counts. In any case we are much more interested in those characteristics which cannot under any circumstances be considered pathological and in those which are the bearers of positive creative values rather than in the recognition of suspicious traits.

## 2. Characteristics of Configuration in the More Complicated Pictures

Even though we shall now refer to all the pictures known to us, not just the ones we have reproduced, we should nevertheless point to a few typical examples which show the traits which interest us particularly graphically. They are the works of Knüpfer, Figures 124 through 128, most of the works of Klotz, especially Figure 108, and also Figure 95 by the sculptor Brendel. The most common quality so strongly suggested by the majority of our pictures seems to be the preponderance of all those tendencies which we attributed to the playful urge, to an as yet aimless active urge. It should be said again that we did not intend so moralize in distinguishing between play and seriousness. Instead we emphasized that in play, broadly defined, impulses are put to use freely as they arise, without being made to serve an externally defined purpose or meaning. For that very reason unique personal qualities express themselves most directly in free activities which simultaneously represent for us the most basic form of the configurative process and even of genuine intuition. In playful activity, which includes particularly the interpretation of indistinct forms, there appears, in other words, the imagination.

Elsewhere we shall speak of the conceptual contents of our pictures. Here we are concerned only with the tendency, the attitude, the process, not to say the mechanism, of playful configuration. Our extensive investigation among similar processes in daily life and in artistic configuration does, however, make a final decision more difficult as to where to draw the line of pathological playfulness. Indeed, it is almost impossible even with some expertise and critical judgment. We might try to draw such a line at some degree of inconsistency or other, but it would testify only to our personal subjective imagination and to our ignorance about the artistic imagination at work throughout all the ages of man. There is only one exception which would permit us, at least intuitively, access to strange, unapproachable psychic sources, and that is when we know the meaning of a game to its originator. A healthy person strengthens and refreshes himself in play. Any creative artist after all still seeks symbols for what is significant in even the most bizarre excesses of his imagination. In our material, on the other hand, play itself often remains its own justification, if not almost life's only purpose, as for Klotz, from whose works we have cited only a few of the most important examples.

When Justinus Kerner prepares blot graphics he gathers the blend of accident and arbitrariness together by means of a few lines of verse and joins them into a meaningful

whole, no matter how loose, which bears the stamp of his personality. His method is probably the typical "normal" process of play; the meaningless can at any time be infused with meaningful interpretation or be rejected as nonsense. The schizophrenic, on the contrary, is delivered up to his playfulness because he is under the control of the secret meaning of all perceivable objects, especially those he himself creates. It appears to be his task to find the meaning which seems to him to be objectively present in things. It is probably due to his general unsteadiness or inability to concentrate that he generally does not brood over his interpretations but again reorganizes them playfully and capriciously, one way today and another tomorrow. Once the interpretations of playfully developed forms are systematized, however, the eccentricities of the system are certain evidence that his playfulness has pathological origins. We are sure that in our material free play with forms predominates unusually strongly, without being able to derive from it alone a convincing pathological trait.

The second major quality of our pictures, the tendency toward a luxuriant language of forms, which goes hand in hand with the urge to play, presents us with the same problem. Major examples are again furnished by Klotz as well as by Beil, and by Figures 5, 6, 14, 46, 71, and 77. The uninhibited outbursts of color and form, as much as the sheets can take, have about them something barbaric in their joy as well as their naïveté or lack of thought or, if you will, lack of the critical faculties. Again, these qualities cannot in themselves be considered characteristic except in relation to other traits.

The peculiarities of the ordering tendency are rather more decisive, as we have already indicated in discussing the simple scribbles. Two main points are opposed to one another. On the one hand, we find a simple, logical, often really monumental construction in the works of completely confused and deteriorated ill persons, indeed paralytics, which can even be combined with completely careless details, as in Figure 10. In such a case the construction alone is significant among the rubble of the form elements. On the other hand, drawings with very loosely accumulated form elements often approach chaos without being subjected to even the barest hint of any principle of order, although this is not as frequent as the layman would expect. We gave just one example, Figure 64. The suggestive force of the simplest configurative devices such as lining up, regular alternation, and symmetry proves itself surprisingly strong. These devices or principles defy almost all dissolution and therefore testify to a deeply rooted inclination to impose abstract order or rules on the chaos of the outside world. Of course they turn only seldom into the free, lively order which we called rhythm translated into form. Instead rules are usually submerged by mechanical rigidity, the pedantry of dull, even repetition unregulated by any superimposed formal intention. We have already identified this pedantry with the pointless logic with which a motif, whether formal or regular, is pursued independently. This eccentric arbitrariness, as in Figure 46 and 124, seems to be almost a specific symptom corresponding to those known as iteration and stereotyping.

A fourth peculiarity of our pictures, namely the ruthless, free dealing with the external world, leads us far afield. We emphasized several times that lovingly realistic representations are very rare and come mostly from patients who were practiced amateurs. The copying tendency of which we spoke therefore applies only to the forms of details. The stronger the configurative power of our artists is, the less is their obligation to real relationships. Why, in Figure 108, should a wave of hair not be simultaneously an eagle's wing; why should a Ganymede not take to the air behind a fashionable fop? Poodles play on a sofa which stands next to a rock, a hippopotamus with two heads stands on a boot-jack — there are any number of examples. Of course this kind of irresponsible imagina-

tiveness cannot be separated from the imaginativeness in art which is familiar to us all the way from Irish ornamentation through medieval sculpture and book decoration to Bruegel, Hieronymus Bosch, and Kubin, not to mention the art of the Orient and of primitives. The arbitrariness in the choices of form parts and their bold intermixtures, however, which often clearly betrays the artists' pleasure at the absurdity of the results, lends our pictures a nuance of unrestrainedness and pointlessness which normally occurs very rarely.

We might well ask about the psychological basis of this arbitrariness. It is undoubtedly related to the playful attitude, but in the final analysis it depends on the artists' relationship to the world. No external object retains any inherent value for them which would make demands either on them or on the viewer. Instead everything is simply grist for their mill, material for the autocracy of their inwardly directed autistic psyches. If we did not have the concept of autism in psychopathology we should have to invent it because of the compelling evidence of introversion found in the material. Although objects have lost their inherent value and are no longer anything of and by themselves, they serve as bearers and representatives for the psychic movements of the artists. A child's head seen outside is transfigured with the facial lines of old age, and reminds the drawer of death (Figure 56); a radish pulled from the earth reminds him of Christ with chalice and host; heads are gruesomely distorted (Figures 53 and 54); horrible scenes which reveal old terrors congeal on insoles (Figures 71 and 72); heads unite, two emperors become one (Figure 98); bodies disappear between a head and legs (Figure 89); and Christ appears in a picture only as a surrogate for the drawer or sculptor. Such significance, conceived by the artist's own omnipotence from strange and probably largely delusional inspirations, is often increased by oracular inscriptions — recollections and transitory ideas determined by wishes, fears, or magic intensions — any of which can attach themselves to harmless looking details. It is precisely the disproportionate contrast between a simple factual picture and the significance it holds for the artist that is a characteristic trait, even if that contrast is not always so obvious as in "The Forest with Dragons and Birds," Figure 64.

The habit of using all external things only as grist for their psychic mills immediately leads even relatively modest talents into a more or less symbolic but nevertheless firm and consistent language of form — into a personal style. We can notice this easily in each of our major cases but it holds true also for the majority of our remaining artists. A highly valued artistic quality emerges from the autistic turn away from the world and toward autocracy, even if the final achievement is measured only by the degree of perfection or the degree of tension between vitality and configuration. We shall speak of the substantive contents of symbolism later. As far as technique is concerned there remains only the question to what extent the drawers use traditional symbols for the meanings they attach to their drawings, to what extent they create new ones for themselves, and what in either case is unusual. This question is in fact so fascinating that it demands exhaustive investigation. Here we only list the major points: as sources of symbolic tradition there are the churches, popular customs, and special study. As long as a drawer moves within the customary conceptual world the first two sources are automatically transmitted to him. If he makes use of them it is usually with a preference for the decorative arrangement of symbolic forms, for a sort of graphic recapitulation of his fund of concepts. We frequently find arrangements of traditional symbols at all levels of configuration. The most complex symbolists, like the sacred artist Moog who mastered ecclesiastical symbolism and the allegorical meaning of biblical scenes astonishingly well, make them

a subject of study. The problem becomes both obscure and fascinating, however, when patients carry out their own philosophical battles with instincts and cultural forces, because although they use traditional symbols (the patient who painted Figure 78 is a major representative of this type) they spontaneously or, from another point of view intuitively, add new meanings to old symbols or even create new ones out of their own conflicts, perhaps with the aid of reading.

As we mentioned earlier, nothing very much is known about expressive psychological nuances and their interpretation which could be documented, and we therefore refrain completely from speaking about the relationships of individual pencil strokes to the character and psychic state of the drawer. On the other hand, we have collected in Figure 168 samples of the handwriting of our major artists which offer valuable material for the so far completely unanswered question as to how mental illness becomes apparent in handwriting, especially because the cases are quite exhaustively described. According to a preliminary report by Klages it seems to be nearly impossible to find signs of personality changes in the handwriting of the great majority of schizophrenics. He does not mean patients in acute stages with catatonic symptoms, of course, but patients in calm, confused final states, like paranoiacs. Also unanswered is the question whether there is any consistency in the choices of colors made by all schizophrenics or by specific types. Our investigations, which have been aided by experts, have so far led to no result; no regularity has been noticeable. The most glaring color assortments occur just as often as any other color selection, ranging from strong, contrasting, harmonious combinations to subdued variations around a central color.

### 3. The Psychic Basis of the Expressive Need

We discuss the substantial psychic basis of experience only now, after our exhaustive treatment of the creative components, not because we are inclined to formalism but purely because we are cautious about methodology. An ideal method of representing configurative problems would also be founded on the outlook and psychic structure of a few individuals and explain configurations as closely as possible as expressions of these persons, within the limits set by a few inescapable configurative principles, of course. If it is difficult to apply such a method to artists who usually at least talk extensively about existential problems, it is well-nigh hopeless to apply them to schizophrenics whose psychic structure and its functions cannot be measured by our scale. No matter how fascinating many details and many surprising interrelations are in the biographies of our 10 schizophrenics, they are simply insufficient as convincing experiential evidence. The facts we collected are a patchwork of the observations of many physicians; we are at the mercy of accidents and the whims of the observers for each of these "objective facts." When statements about a patient's life are based solely on his own descriptions, which is often not made clear in the medical histories, we have no way of knowing how much he has invented. When relatives report we do not know the standards by which they selected their information. In short, confidence in the objectivity of medical histories is easily shattered. Pictures on the other hand are objective, expressive representations, and an observer who clearly

meine Herrn, ich erziehe die Kinder, dem B. gefällt,  
zu erst nicht, die Diktion zu leiten, aber da mit ihm, l.

a

Ballung nicht ein Leben für ihn ge  
die Vorwürfe erwidern will ihm das  
brings gelassen für die p. Zufuß p.

b

Der selbe kreibt einem ge  
das "fest" hinten und vorne  
dem "Uelkropfe", und hat  
Lederzunge" angekuppelt

c

Wenn man man für den dran Schafet mit bewacht  
mit dem fließ von furchen auf dem fließ  
jet mit ein Kleidur spracht mit man Lert  
ginge auf die bühnen mit fadentalt, mit man.

d

die Doctoren nicht geglaubt haben, sondern die  
andere Erscheinungen in das Reich der Fabel get  
haben, so wänden sich dieselben an diesem hö  
nen Geisterbild spiegeln können in ihrer Unm  
wachten lassen, indem sie für die Aufklär

e

Fig. 168a-e. Handwriting of Cases 17 (a, b), 36 (c), 16 (d), and 18 (e). Original size.

Der Aristokrat ist der Macher der Erde.  
Der Aristokrat geht nie rechts an.  
Der Aristokrat hat keine Nachmittagsjause. (Dämmerungsmahl  
Aristokraten haben die Finger täglich aneinander zu zulen.  
Nie aus ihrem Munde austreten ...

f

Herr verbleibe Herr befehle,  
wie du willst auf immerdar!  
Herr, errette und besiede:  
"Was da ist, und ewig war!"  
" // Aristos von Trabant

g

Nach Bekundigung über den unbeschriebenen  
Ellen und sonstigen eifriger Gespräch bezeich-  
te Hylle. Ob ein Ellern findet man aus dem An-  
gläublichen eine Freude u. wenn was unerschick-

h

Was trinken ich grob u. 5 Salzburger Pfe  
wer esse. ich bring hoch 3 mal weiße Oße  
wo wohne al Lade ranblast in 177?  
wie arbeite esse geveik Spitznamen  
wann Soldat trinke Eckpost renner

i

Fig. 168f-i.

Handwriting of Cases 90 (f), 193 (g), 180 (h), and 244 (i).

Original size.

reveals his theoretical premises may achieve a higher degree of objectivity in their interpretation.

The aforementioned considerations will justify our caution in the following descriptions of the substantive psychic experiences of schizophrenics. A purely psychiatric approach is insufficient; a psychoanalytical one is rewarding particularly in thorough interpretations of symbols, but only when the analyst has a great deal of knowledge and critical ability. An ethnopsychological investigation of magical and symbolic thinking has just begun. Attempts at interpretations which are insufficiently documented therefore only run the risk of causing confusion in other current research. We must therefore be temporarily satisfied with a survey which badly needs amplification by a more knowledgeable hand.<sup>31</sup>

We already noted that our material lacks descriptions of simple objective experiences. They are not absent, but they play only a minor role. We also emphasized that works with a representational tendency originate almost always with amateurs and artists, not with the untrained. The explanation is probably that old habits assert themselves rather automatically in these cases, whereas the desire for representation is far from the mind of the schizophrenic who is newly inclined to draw. A patient whose work is in the collection, for example, and who was an amateur practitioner of all the arts, painted the view from his window about 40 times under various light conditions, mostly in watercolors, pencil, and ink on toilet paper. His action mirrored, without showing any pathologically suspicious trait, the struggle with a motif of an amateur oriented toward realistic representation, as well as his pleasure in variations on an objective theme. In this instance he was able to permit the external objects to retain their intrinsic value and richness while at the same time playing with them.

The rest of our pictures, however, are dominated by the unusual and the strange, and are determined above all by their extraordinary relationships to the psyches of their authors. Once again we can mention only briefly a subject requiring a thorough exposition, especially one based on metaphysics: leafing through our pictures, and simultaneously

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<sup>31</sup> Let us, however, expressly emphasize that this happens only temporarily, to save work and because of scientific caution. The major charm and also the real cognitive value of our pictures becomes clear only when we succeed in making progress in the interpretation of symbols. But the study of symbols is not yet so well grounded so that we could simply rely on it. Lacking above all is a critical, well considered transmission of esoteric knowledge which is now so miserably watered down into popular forms by the half educated that the educated minds of the last generation have completely lost contact with these great cultural forces. Even the symbolism of the Christian church has not received any satisfactory scientific treatment. The only impulse of any importance which has prepared the ground for the study of symbols once again came from Freud, Jung, and their followers. It does not matter what limits anyone believes he must set to any interpretation of symbols by members of this circle: if the desire for an investigation into the mysterious origins of symbols and their effectiveness in the lives of individuals as well as society once again interests a large number of people, at least one seed from Freud's school bears fruit, even in his opponents. Especially the elaboration of Freud's thoughts by Jung contains, among the obscure mixture of facts and interpretations drawn from many and remote subjects, some insights which must still be elucidated and which are quite independent of the validity of any details.

Above all we refer to the concept of original pictures which, while going back to Goethe and used also by Jacob Burckhardt, was used only by Jung in the logical explanation of individual experiences (see especially *Wandlungen und Symbole der Libido*, 1912). Even if one day we found ourselves compelled to jettison the foundations of this whole mode of thought as errors of the age, the importance of this bold attack on the more antiquarian, cataloging observational method of a science determined by its belief in natural-scientific and realistic facts remains. But from quite another quarter we hope for a philosophically based study of symbols which will once again uncover for us those hidden wells of ancient wisdom and which may therefore also contribute to the psychoanalytical efforts precisely because it is not based on the same ground: Ludwig Klages indicates in his monograph, *Vom Wesen des Bewußtseins*, Leipzig, 1921, that he finally intends to publish his teachings in symbolism.

through the biographical information about our 10 main cases, proves conclusively enough that in the psychic life of these patients religion and eroticism are much more prominent than we notice – to express ourselves carefully – in healthy persons. A part of the problem is so defined that we can always cite the popular “release from inhibitions” and then ascribe any differences to it. We would then have to ask, however, what it was that caused the inhibitions to be released. Suggested answers might be the autistic devaluation of the outside world, the overburdening of the self with affective stirrings and other things of this sort, but we would not be able to avoid the one positive and, to us, the one specifically schizophrenic symptom, and that is the express metaphysical urge which in a sense has the way prepared for it by the devaluation of the external world and the dissolution of reality and unreality. We still face the disquieting question, however, whether the schizophrenic metaphysical urge founded on that basis resembles that of the healthy person or whether the latter is founded on other premises. We can see that we always return to the fundamental problem: the relationship between the bases of configuration of healthy persons and those who are mentally ill.

We believe that the answer is the same as in all other problems of this nature. The basic tendency is the same for the healthy and the ill. It receives its modifications, which give it individuality and cultural value, only secondarily from other factors, *e. g.*, the uncritical acceptance and use of perceivable facts, or the convincing derivation of human needs from basic instincts. We might also suggest a daily experience as a relatively minor but nevertheless valid confirmation of our concept of a uniform metaphysical instinct: positivists and realists of all kinds have always regarded any metaphysical inclination with suspicion, whether it appears in a young man who demonstrates at puberty that he will not allow himself to be captured by the utilitarianism of a rationalistic world, or when it reveals the protesting attitude of an adult who does not want to adjust to the dullness of daily existence.

In many pictures we see simple ecclesiastical themes, recollections which we should not misinterpret as expressions of active psychic processes. But such reminiscences seldom remain alone. Additions and inscriptions indicate that the artist thinks about religious problems and attempts his own combinations of symbols, which soon produce a strange mixture of nonsense and impressive oracular effects, arrived at either by arbitrary playfulness or by empty systematizing. A picture always mirrors the milieu from which the patient comes as well as his personal development down to the smallest detail. Particularly astonishing, in view of the personal elements of the individual forms, is the very powerful overall effect emanating from such seemingly calculable works. There are two radically opposed explanations for this undeniable and repeatedly tested impression, both completely satisfying once we recognize their premises.

According to the first we would be dealing only with accidental effects. A man draws whatever happens to come into his mind and it is by pure chance that his work makes such a mysteriously deep impression on us. Nothing of what we think we can feel in his work applies to the man himself. But anyone who is satisfied with this explanation does not see the problem at all. Even when an artist has no idea what he is really doing, that fact is of quite secondary importance for the problem of configuration, but it adds difficulties to the interpretation of a picture's contents. When a picture conveys a sinister feeling to *every* viewer, the sinisterness is a component of the picture, not a predisposition within any one viewer. But if that component is part of the picture, its existence is due to its author, and the problem resolves itself into the question whether he would be capable of producing it, even unconsciously.

That question is answered by the other, diagonally opposed, explanation, namely the mystical: our patients are in contact, in a totally irrational way, with the most profound truths, and have reproduced, unconsciously, pictures of transcendence as they perceive it. If we do not take these words so literally as to understand by them things or beings actually located in space but substitute for them basic human phenomena or innate images, we gain a more congenial explanation. In another connection we again arrive at the same principle: there are psychic forms of expression and, corresponding to them, representational configurations which would necessarily be almost identical for all people under identical conditions, somewhat like physiological processes. The effects of civilized customs and limiting rules disturb and inhibit the normal relationship, but exceptional circumstances of all sorts, in which the common everyday strictures are suspended, favor the primeval developmental processes.

The principle of repression would also apply to erotic experiences. They express themselves no less freely and tangibly in our pictures than the religious, which they also resemble in seldom aiming at stark facts but, on the contrary, at fundamental and metaphysical interrelationships. Not that simple obscenity is lacking, but it is surely more characteristic of mental health. When in contrast a patient depicts a farmer casting seeds in a field which in the background is transformed into a feminine lap, we know that within that patient there exists an ancient symbolism of fruitfulness and that he is metaphysically attuned to the laws of existence, not realistically attuned to external facts. And when hermaphroditism concerns not just our woodcarver but several other schizophrenics as well and in a similar form, we can safely assume that all of them are stubbornly trying to come to grips with ancient phenomena, even if their lack of knowledge makes real enlightenment unlikely.

The blend of religious and erotic fantasies is, however, especially characteristic; it is very familiar from the beginnings of human culture and must be considered a long lost treasure – unless we are totally satisfied with our civilization, which is cleansed at least outwardly of this feature. We found repeatedly that Christ (identified with the patient himself) is represented with a feminine supplement, Christine or the *Jesin* or *Jesess*, apparently in justification of the artist's own need for supplementation. The crucifixion of a woman, alone or with a man, is another favorite theme, and so is Christ with a phallus, as a sort of fertility god. Quite often the symbolic meanings are unclear, as for instance in the picture of Christ with the fish tank in Figure 77. It would be at least conceivable that a "cleansing" of the woman was intended. It is difficult in any case to explain all the possible meanings of such an ambiguous work even if its author had provided us with the most exact explanations, because the story of its conception within the individual is only one side of the problem, and the most superficial one at that. The process of configuration as such leads us much deeper. Only a convincing explanation of the development of symbols could provide a firm base from which we could begin to analyze phenomena which cannot be quantified.<sup>32</sup>

To us there remains the undeniable fact that our patients, particularly the schizophrenics, are almost without exception filled with a striving for the absolute, which often leads them to profound ways of posing problems. When they then treat absurd solutions seriously it simply means that we see an uncritical process, *i. e.* one not adapted to our thought conventions which are attuned to well defined rational concept formation, and we attribute the lack of judgment to the autistic self-importance of the artists. However, we must

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<sup>32</sup> See the end of footnote 31.

not deceive ourselves about the fact that this is no criterion at all for distinguishing the attitude of the schizophrenic. Phenomenologically we cannot distinguish the reasoning of a mathematician, operating in a fourth dimension on the basis of completely abstract but logically correct assumptions, from that of a schizophrenic who posits an electric power station in whose current he swims as the cause of certain physical sensations. The former is not more correct, more real, or more valid than the latter. Nothing more is required than a logical attitude toward a basic principle and the abandonment of everyday habits of thought. The difference appears only in the role which the different hypotheses play in the life of the person who posits them. For the mathematician they are free play from which retreat is always possible. For the schizophrenic they constitute a compulsive having-to-think-that-way, a sense of being harassed to give at least some meaning to otherwise unbearable experiences by systematization. It is the affective aspect of the systematization which enables it to grant release to its creator and gives it life in his eyes in spite of all the absurd details, whether because the successful symbolization achieved in configuration gives him satisfaction or because in his system he, like Sell, has at least identified the adversaries whom he can now fight, instead of fighting anonymous forces.

Many readers will no doubt be astonished that the representation of exceptional experiences, especially hallucinations, is very rare, but we cannot hope to measure the importance of such experiences to their subjects according to the yardstick of the interested viewer. He usually looks for describable qualities and wants to know whether an apparition is colorful or colorless, moving or at rest, representational or physical, etc., and is angry and disappointed to find no understanding or even objective interest in the hallucinator. In reality all describable qualities are apparently submerged in the total experience, like the numerous individual tones which hardly dent the consciousness of an enthusiastic listener when he first listens to a symphony, while a theoretician would have precise answers to many questions.

It is too bad that so far no theoretically trained person has reported on his own schizophrenic experiences. It would be fascinating to learn whether his critical attitude had withstood the experience. Hallucinations induced by drugs have never crossed the line at which they become overpowering. Only then would we approach the center of the phenomenon, which seems to consist of the fact that people and animals "seen" in hallucinations are not perceived as objects belonging to the outside world but as very special "apparitions" with extremely close personal ties to the ego experiencing them. Their significance lies less in their deceptive tangibility and physical reality than in their function as the bearers of enlightenment, revelations, and prophecies.

If we accept this explanation we will no longer find it incomprehensible that hallucinations are so seldom pictured. The higher their mystical content the less need is there to represent them. Often hallucinatory experiences are drawn on only after a long time, as in the cases of Neter and Brendel. That fact too can be easily explained: the actual importance of the apparition has diminished in the course of time and has shifted from the emotional into the rational sphere so that the experience can now become the "object" of a representation. We have emphasized time and again that dreams very often take on an hallucinatory character. Many patients are in constant doubt as to whether their "visions" appeared while they were awake or dreaming, and many claim to have drawn their dreams.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>33</sup> Unfortunately our material does not offer enough footholds to follow up such dream stimuli because it was just the patients of whom it is reported that they drew their dreams who no longer give exact information

The differentiation of genuine objective hallucinations from freely imagined combinations is just as uncertain. It is possible in both cases that the resulting pictures embody wish fantasies of their creators. We can therefore look for no distinguishing mark there. We must insist that the occurrence of an hallucinatory experience cannot be established on the basis of a picture but only from the patient's explanations. We wonder how many similar later experiences were triggered by the apocalypse and the splendid description of the appearance of God in *Ezekiel I*. Ghosts are also still popular enough so that they do not necessarily have to be explained by hallucinations but encourage the interpretation of uncertain shapes by their mere conceptual reality alone.

Let us now conclude our remarks about the dominance of experiences by recalling once more the common features of the most favored themes. The ambiguity of the objects of our pictures is probably always crucially important. Clearly defined and certain facts have little attraction, but they can be easily reinterpreted – as for instance a shock of hair into an eagle's wing, a long wig into a waterfall, half a face into a body, or a root into a goat's foot. The drawer can proceed in several ways, either by accepting some quality as real (the wave of the hair "flies," the tree "stands," etc.) or by utilizing a form which is freed from its function as an associative stimulus. The latter would mean free interpretation, in which the outline is most important, as in Klotz's work. And finally the drawer can associate on the basis of verbal sounds and concepts. In practice, of course, all these methods are constantly mixed. Nor are they themselves to be considered pathological symptoms. Only their exorbitant growth to the detriment of the work as a whole makes them suspicious.

Secretiveness is closely related to ambiguity and depends on it, but once again a real, objective ambiguity is not really necessary. The need for the secret and the supernatural finds its justification in even the most harmless objects, as the descriptions by patients of many apparently very clear pictures prove. If we inquire into the motivations for the secretiveness we enter more deeply into the peculiar displacements of the emotional lives of our patients. We often speak of the absence of activity in schizophrenics when we mean only the lack of *purposeful* activity. The latter of course usually is absent, but not the activity of thought, which we have just begun to understand slightly through research into primitive modes of thought. In another connection we have contrasted the rational-objective, conceptual, or analytical mode of thought with complex or collective thought. Then we were concerned with the act of perceiving and the formation of the eidetic image. Here we have to contrast another mode of thought to objective thinking, namely magic "thinking." We saw its effects in several instances, particularly those involving Welz and Brendel, in their actions (stranglings with a reflected ray of the sun, intentional movement of the stars, drawing by means of a glance, etc.), as well as in their pictures (expressive loops, the insole drawings). We explain nothing by making the patients' indiscriminateness responsible for their strange actions. We should rather attempt to uncover the positive stimulus. In describing it as an urge to incorporate secret relationships into pictures and to produce strange effects with them which we can only call sorcery, we find ourselves in the realm of magic thinking which aims not at judgment and knowledge but at effects, and which does not look for objectivity but for the most intensive exploitation of subjectivity. It involves not so much thinking as willing.

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or have died. We therefore prefer simply to indicate that dreams are an important inspirational source for our drawers and above all are the most important approaches for us for an understanding of inspirational processes – the free creative components of all psychic life – and symbolic experiences.

If we emphasize the absurdities and disjointedness of many pictures, we should in all justice also speak of the numerous pictures which are distinguished by unity, at least in the emotional attitudes they reveal. We often had occasion to acknowledge the great pathos in many pictures and the monumental effect they produce, particularly the works of Pohl, who was artistically trained, but also Figures 41, 55, 111, 121, 127, and 139, as well as others. Because we know that patients frequently express very similar pathos verbally, usually in connection with their megalomania, the pictorial effects are not overly surprising. What we find impossible to explain on the usual psychopathological basis is that patients who otherwise would be considered prime examples of a complete disintegration of a personality manage such uniform, extremely dramatic achievements as Figure 167, the title picture by Pohl.

The opposite of pathos is much more complicated. Humor appears to us in exceedingly varied forms, and it is a pleasant task to pursue the variations in detail. Contemplative humor is rarest; angry playfulness, more frequent. Irony is by its very nature totally excluded because it always refers to commonly accepted conventions, the very thing the schizophrenic has excluded from his thought. Rough, popular, and grotesque jokes are favored most, and a certain joy in unusual combinations which defy nature is also often expressed verbally. (See especially Brendel's pictures, Figures 79 through 101, but also Klotz, Pohl, and Moog, Figures 43 through 45 and 50 through 54, among others.)

## II. Areas of Comparison

1. We had to rely on children's drawings even for our analyses of the simplest scribbings. Their relationships to our material are not to be reduced to a formula. There can be no doubts about the similarities in the portrayals of the human figure, which is so often chosen as an object of comparison, but this similarity has nothing to do with mental illness, only with inexpertness. Untrained adults also by and large draw childishly. For us, however, realistic depiction, which is dependent on numerous hardly controllable factors, is less fascinating than the kind of objectless, unordered scribbings on which very little research has been done. The only work which asks the same question we do is the one by Krötzsch, *Rhythmus und Form in der freien Kinderzeichnung* (Rhythm and Form in Free Drawing by Children).<sup>34</sup> We have some conceptual and terminological reservations about this book, but at least Krötzsch takes drawing for his starting point and studies the rhythmic progress of strokes, which are at first simply the expression of the psyche before they are subordinated to any other aim. His investigation is not determined by methodology; he knows from the start what is important. He describes the artistic development of children as follows. At the beginning there is simply the joy of movement, followed by the joy at the appearance of lines. Slowly the rhythm, at first rather generous, becomes more refined. No definite forms are intended yet, nor are existing ones interpreted. The first attempts at naming have nothing to do with similarities but use accidentally known words. Only when the world is mastered verbally does form

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<sup>34</sup> See footnote 8.

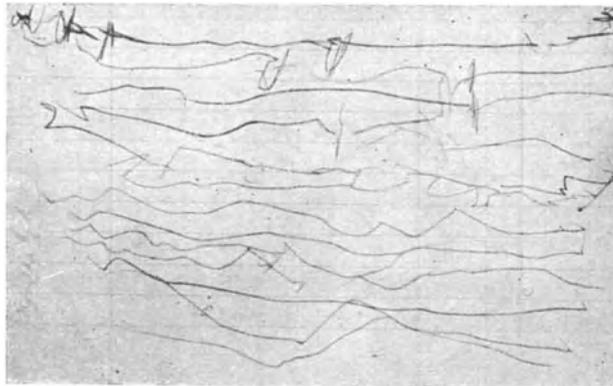
become the bearer of certain concepts, and only then do children look for similarities. They discover complete forms, objects begin to predominate, and the scribbling stage is concluded. The free moving rhythm is consequently changed into the movement of writing, copying, and decorating. This development took place rather rapidly in the particular child under analysis, ending in his third year. The observations of Kröttsch, which are crucial for us, refer to the state of "diminished consciousness" which expresses itself equally in children and adults, namely as a regression into the early stage of childhood. Once again rhythmic movement is dominant and we observe the repression of form, the interpretation of similarities, and the surfacing of an intention to give form which, however, is again submerged or broken off in rhythm. "An absence or weakness of the will and tiredness express themselves in the playful paintings by the strong predominance of a rhythm of movement without formal configuration. Continual appearances of movement rhythms without a will to the composition of forms or continual deflection from formal configuration into movement rhythms indicate an inner disturbance."

Besides Kröttsch's work the only other research of value to us is that of Stern,<sup>35</sup> particularly his explanation of space perception because it distinguishes the quality of the shape of three-dimensional objects sharply from their positions in space. The former refers to the relative positions of the properties of an object, such as roundness, edges or straight lines, etc., and the latter to the egocentric traits of a perceived image as described by such words as "up," "down," "right," and "left," which depend on the observer's angle of vision. Not included is depth, which appears in the eidetic image in a special associative way. The separation of shape from spatial position is characteristic of children, while for adults – if they are trained in drawing, we must add – they become ever more closely connected. According to these distinctions our material could be compared more exactly with the drawings of children and untrained healthy adults. We could call the separation of shape and position, *i. e.*, the neglect of a comprehensive point of view, a pathological symptom only if we can prove that a healthy adult without training would go about things differently. The small amount of material so far available makes us doubt that he in fact does.

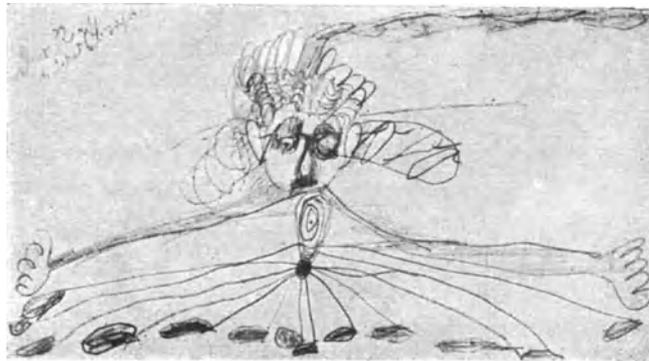
Very little can be done with the whole mass of children's drawings dating to their school years, except for spontaneous drawings which are certain to have originated independently of the schools. Among these we sometimes find fantastic pieces which in their uninhibited unrealism bear some similarity to our material. Figures 169 through 172 are a few typical examples. Figure 169 was produced by a girl nearly four years of age who had drawn very little, and, above all, was never guided. Her drawings were purely playful into her fourth year and showed increasing pleasure in simple principles of order, such as the parallelism of most of the lines and the repetition of certain distinctive curves. Her first representation of a man showed his major body parts lying side by side without any connections, although the child had already demonstrated particularly strong powers of observation and would explain her picture books very rationally and pointedly, without any fantastic interpretations. The "giant," on the other hand, was drawn by a six-year-old boy with a noticeable affinity for fantasy, who liked to imagine fables in detail while in the company of his older sister, and who drew them. The author of Figure 171 was similarly inclined. He developed whole series of such fabulous animals before beginning

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<sup>35</sup> C. and W. Stern, "Entwicklung der zeichnerischen Begabung eines Knaben vom 4. zum 7. Jahre," *Zeitschrift für angewandte Psychologie*, vol. 3, 1910; W. Stern, "Die Entwicklung der Raumwahrnehmung in der ersten Kindheit," *ibid.*, vol. 2, 1909; and W. Stern, *Psychologie der frühen Kindheit*, 1914.



**Fig. 169.** 20 × 14 cm.  
Scribbles by Girl Aged 3<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> Years (Pencil).

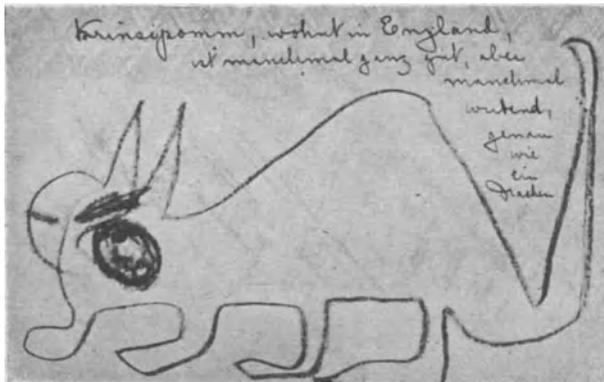


**Fig. 170.** 25 × 16 cm.  
The Giant, Drawing by a Boy Aged 6 (Pencil).

school but stopped soon afterward. Finally, the landscape, Figure 172, was done by Krötzsch's son at the age of six. Especially remarkable is the fact that the real motifs (church, tree, and house) are bordered by dots and small circles, *i. e.*, ornamentally decorated, although the copying tendency is completely dominant. The ornamentation is even more striking because the boy is highly intelligent, has drawn much since his nineteenth month, and serves as an object of observation. It proves how careful and reticent the observer must have been toward the child, who remained so uninhibited despite all the dangers of his upbringing.

We have not yet completely answered the question of how the drawing method of abnormal children, especially deaf mutes and imbeciles, differs from that of average children. The results of the investigations made to date are not completely consistent. We can at least say that above average talent can well occur in combination with moderate imbecility and that deaf mute children have a more pronounced memory for forms, *i. e.* develop their ideas more toward the side of an eidetic image than of a concept. This finding confirms our opinion that language and conceptualization endanger the continued development of eidetic images, and it is also born out by the frequent experience that independence in drawing fades when a child enters school, especially if he has the gift of fantasy.

2. Drawings by untrained adults insofar as they represent eidetic images are essentially childish — we can say at least that much despite the lack of material — as demonstrated



By a Boy Aged 6 (Chalk). Each 11 × 7 cm.

**Fig. 171 a and b.** Two Fabulous Animals.

most convincingly by the great series of drawings, already mentioned, by Hungarian illiterates. These drawings were not spontaneous but compensated for that fact by demonstrating the range of variation among 20 young people from the countryside, all of whom treated the same seven themes. The differences are small as far as the image is concerned, but somewhat larger in the rhythm of the strokes. Two series of drawings done in prisons show the same differences, as we already pointed out. For another approach we have



**Fig. 172.** Landscape with Buildings by Boy Aged 6<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> (From Krötzsch, *Rhythm and Form*)



**Fig. 173 a.**



**Fig. 176**



**Fig. 173 b.**



**Fig. 174.**

**Fig. 173–176**  
Double Figurines

- Fig. 173. New Mecklenburg (Stuttgart, Linden-Museum)
- Fig. 174. Bamum
- Fig. 175. Baruba
- Fig. 176. New Mecklenburg (Hamburg, Völkermuseum)



**Fig. 175.**

to rely on doodles resulting from boredom or impatience, especially those commonly found on telephone pads. It is not difficult to find among them examples which can hardly be distinguished from the scribbles of the mentally ill. That could be a hint that the inner attitudes of both kinds of drawers may well be related, a conclusion which is not impossible psychologically. The relaxed indifference, lack of concentration, or brooding about nothing of the bored participant at a meeting contains so little of his personality that we do him no great injustice by comparing his behavior with that of an ill person. Surely his passiveness is due mainly to what we, with Krötzsch, found responsible for the “diminished consciousness” of children. Tiredness and similar states express themselves in playful scribbles by a strong emergence of a rhythm of movement without formal configuration. Even in the limited amount of material we have we can observe differences, however, which must be attributed to various degrees of exhaustion, and others which contain a personal trait. It seems possible that we can find parallels to a great many

types of drawings by the mentally ill among those done by healthy people, and that it would be hard to distinguish between them.<sup>36</sup>

3. The similarity of many pictures by the mentally ill with those of primitives has often been pointed out. We shall show a few comparable pieces and speculate about them. Through Brendel we came into the possession of quite a number of hermaphroditic double figurines (Figures 89 through 92). Figures 173 through 176 show similar double figurines from New Mecklenburg, Bamum, and Soruba.<sup>37</sup> Most closely related to our carvings are the limestone figurines in Figure 173 from New Mecklenburg and the four-headed woodcarving in Figure 175 from West Africa. In the former the position and execution of the legs as well as the position of the arms are closely related to Brendel's figurines, while the more definite separation of the two half-figures and the rather more cylindrical shaping of the rump are noticeably different. Even more astonishing is the structural resemblance of the four-headed figurine in Figure 175 to that reproduced in Figure 90. In a certain sense the leg part of the African figurine may have remained at the tectonic stage of a socket or the base of a column, but the fact that the contours strongly suggest legs is sufficient to explain that its carver had an eidetic image of legs in a bent position very similar to Brendel's image. The figurine's torso, however, expressly retains the original cubical shape of the wood block, as Brendel's does, and thereby emphasizes two sides as equally valid, namely the parallel fronts and backs, while the other sides are given meaning only by the head floating above them. The way in which the union of four heads seems to rest on the neck column, almost like an independent special organism, is basically similar in both works, but the African repeats the same face four times whereas our carver distinguishes clearly between a bearded and a beardless face. The similarity of Figure 176 lies less in the details than in the overall effect. Figure 174, on the other hands, shows the African combining two human figures freely and fantastically in a work which corresponds completely to our definition of contamination or blending: the two men have only a body in common which is so oriented that the head of one is attached to the buttocks of the other. The figurine can therefore be stood up on either pair of legs. Here we clearly have a play on forms in which the grotesque joke is probably the main feature, a joke which is quite familiar from small clay figurines of all periods.

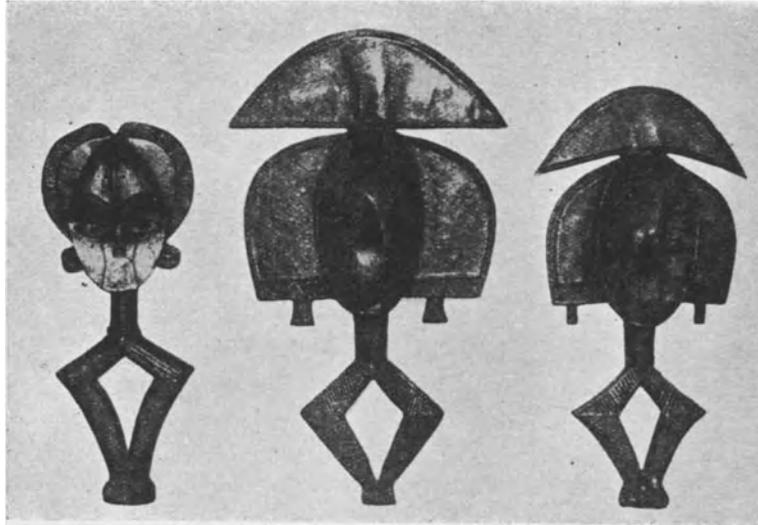
Molding, which is congenial to us because it allows us to try every idea and discard it just as quickly, encourages us to experiment freely with all formal possibilities. Nature has arrived at a few typical arrangements but has ignored countless other possibilities. We can submit to the facts and accept the wisdom of nature, but we can also continue to extend the range of possibilities by drawing freely on the treasure of forms available to us. Anyone who surveys man's attempts at configuration on his small planet over the last few thousand years knows that all periods and peoples have contributed to the creation of forms. New constructions always vacillate between simple play with form and instinctive speculations about deeper or at least different relationships among the things of the world shown us by vision. Increased significance, symbolism, and magic relationships are looked for by children, primitives, and almost every creative person.

Figures 177 and 183, among several other easily accessible pieces, show a whole series of 10 head-and-foot figures comparable to those in Figure 88. These three figurines

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<sup>36</sup> See footnote 43.

<sup>37</sup> For these reproductions we are grateful to Prof. Thilenius of Hamburg, and Prof. Koch-Grünberg of Stuttgart, who were also always willing to give advice and information.



**Fig. 177 a-c.** a) Three Head-Foot Figurines from the French Congo (Goteburg, Museum).  
b) Benin Bronze. c) Wood Sculpture from Soruba (Hamburg, Völkermuseum)

from the French Congo come closest to our flat wood sculptures, even if their legs are more stylized and are completely closed below their connection with the head by a part resembling a neck. In any case a kind of organism is intended. The feet under the impressive Benin bronze figurine, on the other hand, are probably nothing more than a stand, an undefined base of the sort executed more logically in the Soruba figurine with its more craftsmanlike decorated three-column support. The five figurines in Figure 183, which come from different times and circumstances, are also relevant, and we shall therefore revert to the head-and-foot problem later. Of the many figurines which can be found in any large ethnological collection to resemble the pipe tamper in Figure 47 and 48 we reproduce only two, one from the Easter Islands and one from New Guinea. The latter especially resembles the pipe tamper so closely in its proportions, attitude, and expression that we startled even experts by showing them pictures of both of them side by side. Often only the base, which in the case of the pipe tamper suggests the lameness of civilization, helps the observer out of his embarrassment. Figure 178 serves as a comparison for Figure 128, but also for other animal representations. Its author is a woman from the land of the Ekoi in southern Nigeria who used to paint the tribal council chambers, and drew this sketch into a scientist's notebook as a demonstration of her skill. We have reproduced it for its composition rather than for the stylization of animals which are very similar to those drawn by South American Indians. Its charm lies, as in Knüpfer's work, in the suspended tension between order and caprice which we can never completely understand and which causes us to return to the picture again and again to look for the secret key to its irrationally interwoven group.

These examples should suffice and we consider it unnecessary to prove the familiar similarities between childish and primitive representations of humans and space by new material which would then have to be related to our pictures. We have already noted several times that every untrained person, no matter where, regards some of our customary ways of perceiving things with indifference. For that reason we find, for example, that people of all periods, races, and cultural stages ramble along on paper as if they were walking on the earth, turning the paper instead of their own persons. (see p. 176). For the present we submit that a most surprising and close relationship occasionally exists



**Fig. 178.** Leopard, Lizards, Dog  
(Ekoiland, Africa; from Mans-  
feld, *Urwalddokumente*).

between the works of untrained mental patients and primitive peoples, close enough, in the strange motifs as well as the formal arrangements, that it is often difficult to point to differences.

It is important to note that this close relationship exists without any direct mutual influence; otherwise we would be faced with an unimportant fact which would barely be worth mentioning. Nevertheless we can almost exclude the possibility of rational imitation in most cases. That brings us to a major problem which for many people alone establishes the value and inner justification of our investigation of this border area. Let us briefly develop the major criteria for all our questions. It is important for us to understand the procedures because they lead to little explored, but doubtless fertile, scientific virgin territory. Ethnology has accumulated a vast amount of material from primitive cultures during the last generation, but until recently it has emphasized the systematic ordering of countless myths, fables, effigies, and utensils, as well as the exploration of historical-geographic relationships. Adolf Bastian, a leader in modern ethnology, did in fact possess a great deal of psychological and philosophical expertise in addition to his mastery of his own subject so that he distinguished between thought patterns common to all men and those limited to cultural groups. However, the importance of this fundamental insight was subsequently suppressed, especially under Ratzel's influence.

The psychological views of the ethnologists were determined primarily by the "animism" taught by the Anglo-American school of Tylor and Frazer which with a thoroughly rationalistic popular psychology invoked modern concepts of the psyche to explain primitive modes of thought. During the last decades a sounder psychological approach has steadily gained ground in opposition. Its first representatives were Vierkandt and Preuss in Germany and the sociologists Dürkheim and Levy-Brühl<sup>38</sup> in France. They and their followers, whose numbers are rapidly growing, are certain that one cannot explain the psychic life of primitives by demonstrating their partial or one-sided use of logical thought patterns familiar to us – but rather that they have qualitatively different modes of thought. In short, we are concerned with the totally mystical collective method of conceptualizing commonly called prelogical because it makes no provision as yet for the law of contradiction. The members of a tribe whose totem is the lizard call themselves lizards, *i. e.*, they identify with their totem completely, not just in the only logically possible sense of transference. Levy-Brühl calls this kind of conceptualizing the "law of participation." The objective characteristics of objects are far subordinated to the emotional components of collective conceptions. The individual is incapable of forming his own individual world view independent of that of the group. Secret invisible forces, the demons, work in nature and the life of men. The purpose of magic is to find protection from them or even to dominate them.

In psychology Wundt attempted to consolidate the findings of ethnology during the previous century in his ambitious psychology of peoples on the grounds that the basic laws of psychic existence are equally effective in all times and places. By an irony of fate his monumental work was obsolete almost as soon as it was finished because a crucial turn had meanwhile begun to take place in ethnological as well as psychological and sociological research. The new orientation was signalled especially by a decisive, though carefully worded, study by Wundt's disciple, Felix Krueger, "Ueber Entwicklungspsycho-

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<sup>38</sup> The most important is Levy-Brühl, *Les fonctions mentales dans les sociétés inférieures*, Paris, 1910. The book has just appeared in German under the title, *Das Denken der Naturvölker*, Wien, 1921, and is no doubt bound to become the center of the comparative analyses of primitive thought.

logie'' (Regarding Evolution Psychology),<sup>39</sup> which was published in 1915. It put an end to the animistic teachings which Wundt had largely accepted, as well as to any intellectualistic interpretation of primitive psychic life. It is concerned with methodology as well as the theory of evolution, and is closely related to the new ethnology. At the same time it opens the way for a truly comparative observational method which attempts to be as unprejudiced as possible in judging every stage of psychic life, beginning with that of animals. Krueger is especially thorough in distinguishing clearly in psychological research between an analysis of the parts of a given phenomenon including the totality of its qualities, and an analysis of the conditions necessary to it which alone can lead to a comparative investigation of related phenomena. After rejecting any kind of atomistic mechanism of the psyche he restates the aim: to prove a specific but, to the greatest degree possible, uniform subjection of all psychic phenomena to a common law, or, to put it differently, to establish the regular, purely functional constants necessary to actual processes. He intends to show that these constants are quite universal and apply to all forms of affective processes as they occur in humans in all stages of evolution and all periods. In particular they apply to the psychic life of children, primitives, and the mentally ill, the three groups to which the older psychology had done the most violence.

Earlier, psychiatry had occasionally spoken about similarities between the psychic attitudes of the three groups. In fact, any unprejudiced observer finds the parallels compelling. Having been generally neglected, they were first taken seriously, like so much else, by the often vilified innovators of the new psychopathology, Sigmund Freud and a few of his disciples, especially Carl Jung. Freud's study, *Totem and Taboo; Resemblances between the Psychic Lives of Savages and Neurotics* (New York, 1918 [see footnote 3]), to which we have already referred remains the decisive work, and enables us to make comparisons, whether we accept his conclusions or not. Since then Schilder has produced a series of thorough comparative studies under Krueger's influence, and we no longer have to prove their feasibility theoretically. Kraepelin has also recently recommended that comparisons be made.

If we now look once more at Figures 48, 88 ff., and 173 ff., which transmit to us almost graphically the closest relationships between the sculptures by the mentally ill and those by primitives, we can add very little to our short sketch dealing with the history of the problem. Objects which sufficiently resemble each other in at least one aspect so that any justification of the posing of the problem becomes superfluous, provide the best beginning for a comparative study. In this case the similarities in the sculptures' external appearances are easily matched by those of the psychological conditions out of which they grew. We may already state with some certainty one result of the research to date: when numerous sculptures by the mentally ill prove to have the closest formal and expressive resemblance to numerous sculptures by primitives, and neither used models, we see a strong argument favoring the idea that there are concepts common to humanity, and against the idea of wandering concepts spread between tribes and peoples by direct contact. In the newer terminology the argument would be in favor of the existence of elementary thoughts and against the intellectualistic transmission theory. Accordingly a whole row of functions would be latent in every human being which, under certain conditions, would necessarily always and everywhere lead to the same processes. There would be a limit to the number of formal variations, for example, within which every

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<sup>39</sup> K. Krueger, "Über Entwicklungspsychologie. Ihre sachliche und geschichtliche Notwendigkeit," *Arbeiten zur Entwicklungspsychologie*, vol. 1, no. 1, Leipzig, 1915.

attempt of an untrained person to form a human effigy for the first time would have to fall if it were possible to exclude all interfering individual special components. This happens to be possible in the case of an inmate of an asylum who is isolated from the outside world for an extended period. We shall now discontinue our digression into the history of this problem, which at least will have defined the status of the sciences bordering on our subject, and continue the discussion of the individual areas of comparison.

4. The parallels we noticed are by no means limited to primitive cultural stages but appear at all times. Again we shall be satisfied with a few examples selected from a larger group. What, for instance, is the structural difference between Figure 179, the wall of a Mycenaean gold box, and Figure 107? We are not speaking about the skill with which they have been finished, their rational meanings or the possible ways in which forms may be combined, but rather only of the way in which their formal parts are arranged. Nobody will dispute that the arrangement is determined in neither case by pictorial uniformity or rules of ornamental or decorative order. Instead forms insinuate themselves into spaces left free by their neighbors and adjust their main axes accordingly, like the head of the steer! One of the main aims is to fill the space animatedly. Oriental art is abundant with such loose confusions of lines, which are nevertheless given cohesion by the borders and their free, vital rhythm, nor are they unknown in the Occident. Irish book illuminations have produced pages, for example, which closely resemble such works as Figure 109 and others. Moog's work often provides parallels to early medieval art. Figure 180 may be compared to the beautiful birds done by Knüpfer. It reproduces a page from a book of woodcuts printed in 1557.

We could also easily find symptoms considered typical of schizophrenia in older works of art, as for example the blending of three faces in the Holy Trinity in Figure 181, which reminds us of Figures 53, 71, 72, and 103, among others, or the farmhouse from *The Temptation of St. Anthony* by Hieronymus Bosch, Figure 182, under whose gable the gigantic head of a woman appears as if the roof served her as a bandana. Some more head-and-feet figurines, those in Figures 183 and 184, are also relevant. The ones in Figure 184, derived from Bruegel, are taken from the *Songes drolatiques de Pantagruel* (1869). The one in the center once again approximates our wood figurines, except that the arms are attached quite high up and that a narrative motif has been incorporated, the head serving simultaneously as a soup bowl. Its two companions, one on each side, can serve as exemplars of extravagant fantasy. The two figures in Figure 183 are, even more clearly than the soup man, not really head-and-feet men; their faces have instead slipped to their rumps; they are headless and psychologically therefore very different from



**Fig. 179.** Small Gold Box, Mycenae.



**Fig. 180.** Birds; from Lycosthenes (1557).



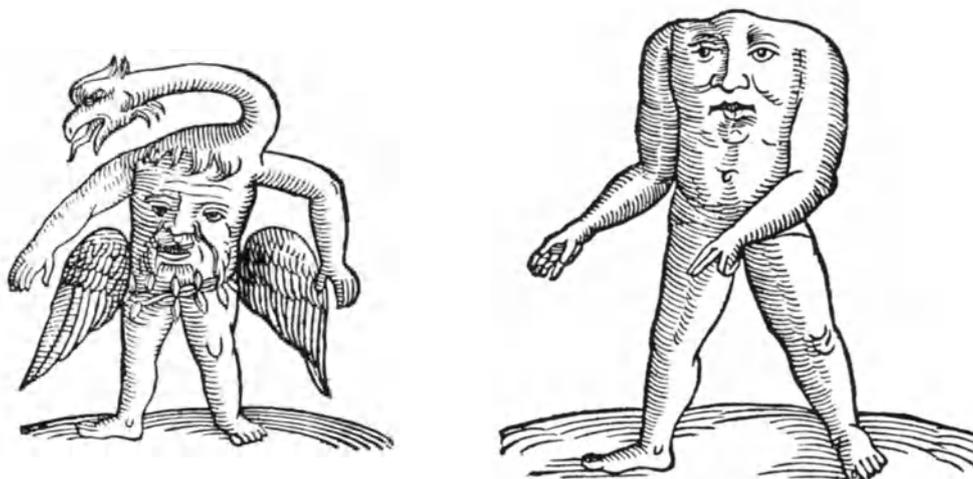
**Fig. 181.** Holy Trinity. Church in Pau, Mecklenburg.



**Fig. 182.** Hieronymus Bosch:  
*The Temptation of St. Anthony* (Detail).

genuine head-and-feet figures which lack torsos. Figure 183 is taken from a collection of signs of the zodiac and monsters published in 1557. Genuine head-and-feet figures also occur in Bosch's work, for instance in his *St. Jerome* and in *The Final Judgment* (Vienna).

There are a few more parallels to the deformities produced by Brendel, particularly in his drawings in Figure 101, in Figure 185 which is taken from the aforementioned collection of monsters. Their creator, Lycosthenes, claims to have derived them partly from contemporary reports on abortions and partly from old traditions. Surprisingly little is known, except by experts, about the tremendous role played by the grotesque in the fine arts as well as the literature of the ancient world and the Middle Ages. We forget all too easily that Cyclopes, Harpies, Scylla, Charybdis, Pygmies, griffins and other mythical beings which achieved permanence emerged at some time from the human imagination and therefore must have a certain psychological significance. When we now find similar figurines, which most probably originated spontaneously without any knowledge on the part of their authors about the earlier creatures, we may assume that a critical investigation of the psychological foundations of these later figurines may throw light on the ancient ones, and vice versa. The man in Figure 185, who uses his single foot as an umbrella reminds us of the hallucinatory "Wonder Shepherd" in Figure 123, but his father happens to be Herodotus who also describes creatures with ears so long that they can cover themselves with them. The five-armed figure in Figure 186 shows how careful we must be in the interpretation of notably unrealistic pictures. It appears in the Heidelberg manuscript of *Der Sachsenspiegel* (The Chronicle of Saxony). A man points to ears of grain as symbols of the fief for which he applies, to himself as the applicant, and extends still other hands to the prince sitting at the right so as to consummate the enfeoffment according to custom. The artist's problem was to embody in one figure three conceptual relationships simultaneously through three gestures or, to put it differently, to concentrate a chronological sequence scenically in one visible moment. His solution dominates all the other components of the picture so strongly that they become merely supportive. We can observe such free play with creative components only in the kind of uninhibited depiction not yet subject to pictorial rules, and which therefore in the eyes of many people would not qualify as art. In any case our material offers especially great opportunities for the study



**Fig. 183.** Two Fabulous Figures from Lycosthenes (1557).



**Fig. 184.** Three Head-Foot Figures from Bruegel.



**Fig. 185.** Four Woodcuts from Lycosthenes (1557).



**Fig. 186.** From the Heidelberg MS. of  
*Der Sachsenspiegel.*

of these basic and original configurative possibilities which can be completely unlocked only by many and various comparisons with similar examples from the whole history of art. We need still more thorough and detailed research before we can say anything conclusive.

5. In presenting our material we were often reminded of folk art, which only a few short generations was still in full bloom and in some areas has maintained itself even into the present day. Tradition will naturally assert itself when a man from simple surroundings who has seen very few paintings suddenly begins to produce some himself. Only the pictorial ornaments of his home town church, his parents' house, and the local tavern will furnish the materials of his memory. We suppose that the same creative urge which produces rural art and occasionally inspires simple works of a high rank continues to live in our patients. We shall say more about the role of illness later.

6. There is one more topic with an especially close relationship to ours which a few years ago was a popular subject for conversation; *viz.* mediumistic art.<sup>40</sup> If we begin with the psychic phenomena we find one important common feature – ignoring for the moment the basic difference that we are not dealing with mentally ill but, socially at least, “healthy” persons – and that is that in both cases persons produce pictures while in an altered psychic state. The one distinction is that in mediumistic art the change is induced temporarily in the medium and disappears, yielding again to an everyday condition, while in our patients the change of the whole personality is permanent. The various possibilities have to be analyzed more completely. According to what we know about the scattered examples of mediumistic art it appears to be of two types. The first is that of the luxuriant ornamental drawing which develops like a carpet from small motifs. This type is primarily represented by Wilhelmine Assmann. The other type is that of landscapes or figures with a deeper meaning. These paintings usually refer to a super-terrestrial locale like Mars, for example, through which the medium likes to wander during his trance. Figures 5 and 6 approximate Assmann's work so closely that the only difference is in the talent of the artist. We have nothing directly comparable to the latter type, which is represented perhaps by A. Machner and Helene Smith. The difference seems to be that the mediumistic drawers, like hysterics when they want to compete with schi-

<sup>40</sup> The most extensive but insufficient treatment is Freimark, *Mediumistische Kunst*, 1914.

zophrenics, become calculating. They always give us an impression of adroitness or slyness. In mediumistic pictures the most remarkable rearrangements of natural forms result from the complete denial and contradiction of the familiar ones, more by a negation or reversal of qualities than by free variation. Houses may be shown wider on top than below, a rock is shown as weightless by being balanced on a thin string of pearls, and leafy plants appear in reds and yellows. We seldom find in mediumistic pictures the instinctive or unreflective growths so common to schizophrenic works.

Cryptographic drawings by hysterics and healthy persons are closely related.<sup>41</sup> Figure 187 comes from a 62-year-old hysteric woman who one day found some relief from her erotic conflicts in drawing these bird and fish motifs. The urge to draw overcame her as she was about to write a letter. She fell into a strangely numb state and was astonished to find that she had drawn a rooster on her stationary, which she burned in trepidation. The next day she produced a kind of elephant which she also destroyed. She noticed, however, that drawing was good for her and continued it. As soon as she began she would fall into a dreamlike condition, and her hand with the pencil would move automatically across the paper. From time to time the pencil came tremblingly to rest, creating the "eyes." At the same time she was so overcome by a feeling of well-being and happiness that she had to pray or call out strange words in a language foreign to her, which she sometimes inscribed on her drawings. This description given to us by the woman when her eerie compulsions made her seek counsel for the first time leaves us in no doubt that erotic substitute actions have led to an orgiastic intensification of feeling. Formally her drawings have the same kind of charm as mediumistic pictures like those by Assmann, and as those in Figures 5, 6, 137, and others. The even, rhythmic movement of the animal-like shapes as well as the tremulous strokes and the uniform filling in of the whole surface with these indistinct creatures account for the effect. In any case we must at least learn from this woman's case that we have to search for insights into the psychic origins of apparently purely playful scribblings even when such origins are not immediately obvious, as in these pictures.

The problems raised by cryptography in the narrower sense are more difficult. Nobody can doubt that a man's personality is reflected in every line he draws, but we are not at all certain what aspects of his personality can be captured in the loops he makes. We must admit that a critical reading of the research to date about the interpretation of handwriting indicates that valuable insights are awaiting discovery, but the pseudo-scientific studies directed at gaining "knowledge of character and success" have only retarded serious research. As to the rational explanations of the contents of cryptographic loops made most logically by Pfister, we are of the opinion that the key to the psychic state of any analyzed person does not lie in the curves he draws. Instead any loop, regardless of its dynamic expressiveness, is valuable primarily as inspiration and could be replaced by other sensory stimuli which do not have to come from the person himself, as for instance loops drawn by another person and provocative words, etc. We hope soon to be able to answer this question, which is very important for the theory of expressive gestures as well as to psychoanalytical methodology. According to our observations so far any psychic complex ready to be expressed will force its way to the surface along any and every possible path. Regardless of the stimulus, ideas and inventions will always

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<sup>41</sup> Dr. O. Pfister of Zurich donated the sheet and gave us the opportunity to speak to the woman personally, which made us especially indebted. Of his writings, which frequently discuss artistic problems, see especially *Die psychologische Enträtselung der religiösen Glossolie und der automatischen Kryptographie*, 1912, and "Kryptologie, Kryptographie und unbewußtes Vexierbild bei Normalen," *Freuds Jahrbuch*, vol. 5.



**Fig. 187.** Playful-symbolic Drawing by a Hysteric (Pencil).

be subject to direction by the dominant psychic conflict and flow into it. We cannot, however, conclude from the functional readiness of affectively overstressed psychic complexes that they will somehow reproduce themselves in pencil strokes. The relationships between expressive loops and the psychic material to be understood with their help must still be systematically investigated.

Psychoanalysts have made repeated attempts to use pictures by persons under analysis as aids in the analysis, *i. e.*, to interpret them symbolically. It has even become fashionable for patients to try to express their conflicts symbolically in pictures, regardless of whether they have had previous training or not.<sup>42</sup> The pictures which have resulted have so far unfortunately been interesting only for their contents and have been inconsequential as configurations. In our opinion it is most improbable that they will lead to any insights into the problems of configuration, and we feel compelled to emphasize by a few basic remarks what separates our approach from the symbolic analysis which is purely concerned with content. Configurations by the hand of man extend into a domain of values all their own which can only be experienced directly, particularly in the special realm called aesthetics, which in its essence is far removed from all other psychic attitudes. Everything depends on our receptivity for the aesthetic, which is completely divorced from purpose. Inasmuch as every composed work participates in several value systems – the purely material, the cultural, the historical, the individual psychological, etc. – we can of course learn to know the real object, the work, in many ways, but we experience its essence only when we approach it without any external purpose, simply as a created work. The author's private life and experiences are not relevant. Knowledge about them only promotes the popular propensities toward frivolity which are alien to art. Even if we investigate the experiences reflected in a work – if we are serious about the work as creation we shall be content to let the accent remain on the general, super-personal, and essential. Even this is secondary, having been inferred from what is immediate and sensible within the work itself – an attempt at describing a work's unique qualities rationally. Anybody unable to experience a picture visually without feeling a compulsive desire to explain or unmask may be a good psychologist, but he necessarily bypasses the essence of the creation. We acknowledge every psychological insight as such, but at the same time we are certain that it leads away from the work to a knowledge of intimate facts. We put the accent on the universal components and subordinate everything else to them, fully conscious that we thereby go counter to the inescapable temper of the times to which we must all make obeisance. The same attitude caused us to limit strictly the validity and value of any pathographic investigation of productive people and to justify the detailed biographies of our ten major artists only by the fact that we needed them as background for their mysterious pictures. Furthermore, it was only the anonymity of our patients which allowed us to reveal their lives so openly.

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<sup>42</sup> Several psychoanalysts have such material and in part have already published it, like Bertschinger, *Freuds Jahrbuch*, vol. 3, 1911, etc.; Pfister, *Der psychologische und biologische Untergrund des Expressionismus*, 1920; Pfister, "Die Entstehung der künstlerischen Inspiration," *Imago*, vol. 2, 1913. Nothing has so far been published of the very fascinating and problematical pictorial works which originated in the course of C. G. Jung's work as objective manifestations of psychic developmental phases. Comparative material from this quarter would be especially welcome in answering the questions as they have been formulated here.

### *III. The Nature of Schizophrenic Configuration*

Following our brief survey of comparable childish, primitive, and mediumistic creations we finally dare to tackle the question of the nature of schizophrenic configuration. We are not about to count the frequency with which characteristics occur in order to compare it with the frequency of the same traits elsewhere. Such simple statistics would not do for our complicated problems. We shall consider any trait distinctive for any particular type of picture only when it is unusually rare in other types. Otherwise the trait has only the validity of an obvious, describable quality. We have discussed the range of these qualities comprehensively in the first part of this section. It is now a matter of sifting out, with the help of the comparative material, the traits which occur in other kinds of pictures, to separate from them the really distinctive and peculiar ones, and to discern in these the essence of schizophrenic configuration. We are aware from the first that we are no longer able to grasp the essence either in the sensuous qualities or in the formal qualities but only in the immediately visible. In its expressive values manifest themselves to us affectively, which we can transmit verbally only to those who have themselves experienced them. We have therefore escaped the domain of rationalism and gladly accept the accusation of speculation by all kinds of "positivists" as long as we can come close to describing the heart of the phenomenon for those of a mind similar to ours.

Among the major traits we found that a playful tendency is predominant as a first stage in the whole range of configuration from that of children, untrained adults, and primitives to that of great artists. While we therefore cannot consider this symptom specific in itself, we can so consider a drawer's intention to be content with what is purely arbitrarily and playfully produced, without any subordination to superimposed formal rules. The symptom, however, points to no single particular disturbance but to a group of functional deviations, among which exhaustion and lack of attentiveness are the most important. To put it another way, playful drawing proves only the presence of an urge for mechanical release which is not directed by intellect, but this psychic condition can appear under very different circumstances and becomes suspicious only when an adult becomes fixated on it without manifesting any other creative tendencies. The same holds for the luxuriant growth of the decorative urge which we frequently noted not only in the work of mental patients but in all comparable groups, especially mediumistic works. There is something barbaric in such abundance and in the pleasure taken in an uninhibited flow of form. It betrays a cult of quantity familiar from the beginnings of many civilizations and also, though now supported by traditional structures, from late periods of decline. We must therefore expect to meet the decorative tendency wherever an expansive nature or elevated spirit is not limited by or forced to conform to firm cultural traditions. Such freedom can accompany a psychotic condition, but it is not specific for it.

Nor can many ordering tendencies, which on several occasions seemed to be especially characteristic for schizophrenics, be considered valid symptoms after our analysis of comparable pictures. Two peculiarly confused combinations remain suspicious, however: the construction of a pictorial scaffold on which to arrange the rubble of formal elements, and the frequently mentioned pointless logic applied to the repetition of detail forms

or to the utilization of an ordering principle. It is a matter less of form than of content. What is omitted is the imposition of meaning, whether it consists in spatial limitation, consistent execution, or the logical development of the content or significance. We have to agree with Kröttsch's statement that "continual appearances of rhythmic lines without any will to formal configuration, or continual digression from formal configuration into rhythmic lines" indicates not just exhaustion, weak-mindedness, or absence of concentration, but also an "inner disturbance." We cannot limit the "inner disturbance" to schizophrenic disturbance, however, but would consider the latter probable only in the case of a combination of the aforementioned characteristics with others.<sup>43</sup> An arbitrary, free treatment of the outside world, a world now considered only raw material without intrinsic value, is also deficient as a specific symptom in our sense because it too appears, and often much more logically, in every piece of fantastic art and in every work aiming at abstraction. Of course art is usually convincingly dominated by unifying rules, whether of form or content, in spite of all the loosening of natural cohesion. At least we are usually able to intuit a "meaning" in difficult pictures. Such meaning is not always a part of drawings by children, mediums, and primitives, however, just as fantastic works by the mentally ill do not lack it by any means, despite their great lack of realism. Similarly with symbolic configuration: an absurd discrepancy between what is visually presented and its meaning indicates a schizophrenic disturbance. At bottom, however, it is not the schizophrenic state of mind as such which expresses itself in this symptom but the childishly playful pleasure in promoting relationships according to momentary inspirations which is present not only in children and primitives but also in the "feeble-minded" of all sorts as well as in every adult with the gift of fantasy who occasionally frees himself from the constraints of reason to let himself go in games of free forms and interpretation. We are always mindful of the great practitioners of play in art, among them Bosch, Bruegel, and Kubin.

We already indicated that the interpretation of drawn lines as expressive movement, commonly known as graphology, has not yet been sufficiently investigated. We can nevertheless accept that there is a kind of reckless, bold stroke whose breathtaking dynamism we find so disquieting that we experience the alienated psychic state of its author directly and visually. Such an eerie impact is achieved notably and primarily by the works of trained artists who become schizophrenic. The most convincing example in our material

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<sup>43</sup> The classical description of the psychic state referred to here, and at the same time of a scribbling process which reminds us most closely of the scribbles in our material, is found in Gottfried Keller's *Der Grüne Heinrich*, vol. 3, p. 270: "But hardly had I drawn half an hour and dressed up a few branches with uniform needles, when I sank into a deep state of dissipation and scribbled thoughtlessly at the edges, as if I were testing a pen. In time an endless weave of lines attached itself to these scribbles which I continued to expand every day when I wanted to begin work, until the monstrosity covered the greater part of the surface like a huge gray spider web. If one examines the confusion more closely, however, he will discover in it the most praiseworthy cohesion and diligence in that it formed, with a continuous line, a labyrinth of pen strokes and curves which produced perhaps thousands of yards, and which could be followed from beginning to end. Occasionally a new method showed itself, in a sense a new epoch of work; new patterns and motifs, often tender and appealing, surfaced, and if the sum of attentiveness, purposefulness, and persistence which was necessary to this senseless mosaic had been applied to a real work, I should certainly have produced something worth seeing. Only occasionally were there smaller or larger hesitations, certain knots in the wanderings of my confused, depressed soul, and the care with which the pen sought to extricate itself from the embarrassment proved how the dreaming consciousness was caught in the net. That is how it went for days, even weeks, and the only change, when I was at home, was that with my forehead braced against the window, I followed the progress of the clouds and their formation while my thoughts ranged afar." The last phrase makes connections with the more passive play with forms for which we invoked, on p. 17 ff., primarily Goethe and Leonardo da Vinci as witnesses.

is that provided by Pohl, whose work reminds us of van Gogh's last pictures. Those readers who are familiar with them will not need detailed descriptions of them, which in any case could not do their tremendous impact justice. We know of two other painters into whose brush-stroke pattern illness introduced a completely consistent individual dynamic movement. It is highly probable that the further development of the spontaneous combustion of the stroke, as we may call it, would lead to another quality which we repeatedly emphasized, namely the ornamentalization of forms which begin to lead a separate existence in addition to their representative functions. Such a separate existence manifests itself on the one hand in the sweeping loops which undoubtedly originate in a high degree of tension and which correspond, on the other hand, to the loose ornamental play with objective forms which is an expression of a relaxed state of mind. The latter, however, is dissociated or split in the same way as the first: two tendencies oppose each other, the copying and the ordering, each of which tries to assert itself ruthlessly in the loops of the strokes. We are tempted to speak of a demonstration of schizophrenic mechanisms in such doubly oriented lineations. Most of the drawings by Beil (Figures 135 though 138) with their unifying, tremulous lines (which despite an unmistakable copying tendency also give in to ornamental play) prove, however, that we must be careful not to systematize despite the most convincing relationships. Beil's case almost certainly involved mania, not schizophrenia, however.

Nor is there much in the way of content which could lead directly to a diagnosis of schizophrenia. We emphasized, and tried to find the reasons for, the infrequency with which hallucinations are depicted. We would be tempted to look on supernatural experiences as specifically schizophrenic if we had not found that they also play a significant role in the art of primitives and in many periods in the history of art. Representations of frightening apparitions are especially plentiful wherever demonic conceptions are alive, particularly in Asia. We think of Japan, China, and especially Tibetan prayer flags which collect frightening ghosts and demons. A quick look at the representations of the supernatural from the Middle Ages in western Europe warns us strongly against making shortsighted generalizations. We can speak merely of a schizophrenic preference for the ambiguous, secretive, and eerie, and of a tendency to see magical and occult relationships. We thereby acknowledge a relationship with the primitive in content as well. No subject matter is therefore excluded from schizophrenic art, but the simple depiction of the outside world is neglected. Whatever is significant for the person himself, especially religion and sexuality, is naturally favored and preferably enriched with magical conceptions.

The final result of our survey is rather modest. We cannot say with certainty that any given picture comes from a mentally ill person just because it bears certain traits. Nevertheless we were immediately impressed by a disquieting feeling of strangeness in many of our pictures which we always believed to be due to the schizophrenic components, and not only due to them alone but also to similar effects produced by other expressions of our patients. Because we give the greatest importance to the direct resonance within our own receptive selves (our spontaneous absorption of strange expressive gestures, in other words), whenever we attempt to penetrate strange psychic life, the meager results of our search for specific characteristics forces us to express in words the total experience as we felt it. Let us try to identify, with the least possible systematization, the quality of those pictures which are most different from all other pictures. We cannot do this except by putting ourselves in the painter's place and trying to understand his total attitudes toward creative tendencies, his own self, and his surroundings. No matter what elements based on experience and seeking a means of expression may be coming to the surface,

we believe the following to be true: in the process of configuration schizophrenics establish out of undifferentiated accidents and thoughtless caprice a formal regularity which does not strive for meaningful consistency. A superficial, formal uniformity results from the naive rhythm of their strokes which themselves reflect the uninhibited stream of inventions. Under favorable circumstances the two tendencies (development of content and the tendency toward formal unification), which are really divergent, coalesce without conscious direction. The resulting picture demands to be evaluated according to the standards of serious art. Usually, however, the configurative process stops just short of real creation, and ideas retain their identity without being integrated into a superior conception, the movement of the loops remains independent of the rhythm of the whole, or the latter ruthlessly subdues and violates every individual form. Even if different nuances appear out of the conflict of single tendencies striving for autonomy, only one is of central importance: the hesitation at the moment of decision which is in any case characteristic of the schizophrenic and which appears in his every ambiguous action and ambivalent attitude.

We might easily connect the state of suspended tension prior to a decision with the schizophrenic's autism and his incapacity to adapt to reality. Every turn away from reality, which after all imposes itself continuously with innumerable sense impressions, leads to the double orientation of which we frequently spoke: a patient is God but sweeps the room willingly; or a physician is simultaneously mailman and coal carrier. Although we no longer see a disturbance of the intelligence in such games we have perhaps not sufficiently stressed the fact that the world outlook of the schizophrenic apparently culminates in the feeling of tension inherent in the ambivalence of such divided orientations.

By accepting this point of view we can finally distinguish the last and perhaps the only distinctive difference between typically schizophrenic configuration and all other configuration. It is essential to all art to seek resonance in other men, to be understood as it is intended. The certainty of such a resonance supports every artist and nourishes his creative urge. The confidence that "the world" will at least someday happily accept what the misunderstood artist, though filled with contempt for it, creates, lies behind even the most distorted, negative attitude toward the public. Given this outlook on the world, the loneliest artist still remains in contact with humanity, even if only through desire and longing, and the desire for this contact speaks to us out of all pictures by "normal" people. The schizophrenic, on the other hand, is detached from humanity, and by definition is neither willing nor able to reestablish contact with it. If he were he would be healed. We sense in our pictures the complete autistic isolation and the gruesome solipsism which far exceeds the limits of psychopathic alienation, and believe that in it we have found the essence of schizophrenic configuration.

A psychopathological question remains which demands a different answer on the basis of our studies than it did previously. Most of the writers who have expressed themselves on the pictures of the mentally ill assumed that schizophrenia was purely destructive, that therefore the pictures would show manifestations of dissolution only, and that at most we could expect to find some psychotic content directly and impressively represented. In the case of artists, stereotypical repetition of familiar themes was supposed to show the beginnings of decline. Our findings on this subject are as follows.

If we exclude the awkward, rather childish works which could have been done by many a healthy adult, we can group the rest under various headings. The categories are not mutually exclusive, however. Instead, each group presents one particular aspect. One group consists of works with a strong predominance of single formal, especially

ordering, tendencies which often result in quite distinctive achievements. Another group is determined by the eccentricities of the authors and therefore presents confused, nebulous combinations of formal parts whose relationships cannot be deduced from their appearance. Good pictures appear very seldom in this category. A third group, in which we would include the straightforward representations of the experiences of the mentally ill, would look very different. It contains many pictures which conform completely to the basic aim of all configuration, to convey to the viewer an unambiguous experience, and our untrained patients are often quite equal to solving the attendant configurative problems despite their technical inadequacies. Therein lies the proof that just such experiences, which are very close to the patients, can trigger their configurative powers, most notably when the supernatural is involved.

Finally there would be a group, including most probably the majority of works by our most productive patients, which would be distinguished by inherent formal talent. If we consider next how few the patients are who draw – fewer than two percent in the Heidelberg clinic, judging by the very thoroughly researched material – and how few real talents are among them, it would seem that there is very little difference from the world of healthy persons. It means that mental illness does not make talents out of the untalented and in all probability causes no one to compose who is not constitutionally ready. In the case of real beginners we can therefore speak only of the mobilization during the illness of a latent creative urge, and the concept of decline would not apply. We must admit also that in ornamentation as well as in the description of experiences many powerful and original works are achieved.

The works of trained people are different. We have to distinguish between configuration along habitual lines, in which no change is noticeable over long periods, and attempts to express the new psychotic outlook pictorially – in which autistic conceptions surmount any claims put forward by reality. As extravagant and strange as Welz's works are, for example, we were nevertheless able to prove that he simultaneously produced completely harmless nature studies in the customary way. Another patient in the totally confused final stage made numerous serious nature studies as before, and Pohl developed his familiar technique even further when his language was already completely confused. There is no scarcity of proof for this kind of development. Existing artistic abilities are therefore not necessarily destroyed by the schizophrenic process but can in fact maintain themselves unchanged over long periods.

The matter does not end there, however, because we have also demonstrated that during the progress of schizophrenia, while the patient declines into a highly confused, unapproachable final state with all the typical symptoms in their greatest extremes, his superficial, craftsmanlike dexterity develops great configurative power which allows him to produce pictures of undoubted artistic quality. We are forced to reach this conclusion not just in Pohl's case but in several others, especially Moog's and Brendel's. Furthermore, we did not see a progressive deterioration paralleling the deterioration of the personality in any of our talented artists. This finding agrees rather well with what we know about the great artists who also happened to be schizophrenics. Nobody disputes that van Gogh's productive potency increased during his illness and raised his work to previously unattainable standards.

The same can be said about two other artists we know of. The case of the Swede Josephson<sup>44</sup> is more difficult, however, because none of the works from the first years

<sup>44</sup> Of Josephson's drawings done during the period of his schizophrenic illness about 40 sheets were published in a folder by Paulson, Stockholm, in 1919 (*Josephsons Teckningar*). A few sheets from it are reproduced

of his illness have been published. His late works appear to be somewhat lame and all too reminiscent of the work of completely untrained people, despite the great morbid charm of the separate ornamentalism of his strokes and similar traits. Only *The Creation of Adam* shows a great increase in creative intensity compared with works done earlier while Josephson was still healthy, while a certain formal dissolution and a preference for unusual spatial effects lends the picture an alienating and supernatural aspect. Occasionally, therefore, the artistic abilities of a personality do not merely remain unaltered in spite of its schizophrenic deterioration but even increase, not just during the acute phase but even in the final state. Perhaps the power of configuration derives a productive component from the process of schizophrenic dissolution.

#### IV. Schizophrenic Configuration and Art

So far we have hardly discussed art. Now we can no longer escape the question: what has schizophrenia to do with serious art? Of course this is not the time for a thorough investigation of this question because some required preliminary research still waits to be done, despite the apparent abundance of literature on the subject.<sup>45</sup> As long as we do not really know how mental disturbances manifest themselves in the works of bona fide artists we cannot begin to answer such basic questions. It simply will not do to "explain" the work of controversial artists by pathographic investigations of their lives. What matters instead is whether a new productive or crippling component can be shown to exist in the works done during the periods of illness which is most probably attributable to the psychic changes produced by the illness. We are often assured that it is only a matter of the life and fate of a private person when an artist is psychopathologically dismembered and that nothing is said about his work. The assurances may be well intended, but the results are always different. Anyone who does not resist these invasions of privacy or does not try hard to achieve the separation we propose between an artist and his work soon finds himself chained to the person and detached from his work. In contrast we believe that we are doing less damage to the validity of works of art by trying openly to follow the configurative process in them and to invoke only the barest essentials from the lives of the artists. Above all we seek the productive forces which perhaps grew out of the illness, and we shall have to distinguish sharply between artists who as constitutional psychopaths tended to exceptional experiences, others who fell victim to temporary mental aberrations or tried to induce them with drugs, and finally the few who changed as personalities because of progressive psychoses (paralysis and schizophrenia). The number of artists whose works can yield valuable insights is not large because we must limit ourselves to those whose biographies are sufficiently well known to deliver up the required psychopathological data. But we shall have laid a foundation broad enough for a discussion

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in the article by Hartlaub, "Der Zeichner Josephson," *Genius*, vol. 2, 1920. Sometime in the future we hope to be able to publish a comprehensive treatment of the works of artists who are known to be mentally ill.

<sup>45</sup> Because at this juncture we do not yet wish to undertake any fundamental investigations of this question, a discussion of the extant literature is not required. Writings like Stadelmann, *Psychopathologie und Kunst*, Munich, 1908, can only give us a very superficial introduction. Hellpach, *Das Pathologische in der modernen Kunst*, Heidelberg, 1911, is mainly concerned with poetry. The best of the periodical articles, because it briefly summarizes all the important findings, is Jolowicz, "Expressionismus und Psychiatrie," *Das Kunstblatt*, 1920. Also see Pfister, footnotes 41 and 42.

about the basic relationship between the two psychic states of the artist (inspiration and configuration) and of the mentally ill, especially the schizophrenic (outlook and configuration) only after calling on the representation of the unreal, fantastic, and visionary from the whole history of creative art. This relationship is the one we earlier called the guiding problem for our investigation.

At the moment we have to be satisfied simply with a few allusions to the major question. Tradition and training play by far the major role in professional art. The truth of this assertion is shown most clearly by the fact that after even a short time the art of many individuals will always appear as the combined effort of a generation, although it may be grouped by races and countries. Art history accordingly speaks of schools and of the styles of certain periods, and gives prominence only to those personalities among the masses of artists who by the surpassing individuality of their personal styles themselves become pioneers. We can hardly cite a case in the whole history of art, however, in which an untrained person, separated from the whole world and completely dependent on himself, suddenly reached for a pencil one day in order to produce pictures. The development of Rousseau, a customs official, is unique.

Formerly all inquiries into the origins of pictorial configuration began with a hypothetical beginner who was naturally thought of as a primitive. With this theoretical individual in mind we tried, by looking at the most ancient artistic artifacts, to understand the origins of art. We already pointed out the impossibility of a solution of the problem as long as it was approached chronologically. Some individuals assert dogmatically that one or a few principles explain the whole intricate process. These principles are based on common observations of the beginning and the development of pictorial configuration in children and on the drawing method observed in numerous primitives. But the creative process has never been investigated impartially and purely psychologically.

The persons who produced our pictures are distinguished by having worked more or less autonomously, without being nourished by the tradition and schooling to which we attributed the majority of the more customary works of art. Our patients are of course not independent of every traditional conception, but in beginning to compose spontaneously they create a gulf so wide from everything that may be learned about configuration, from all knowledge and skill, that today it cannot be equalled anywhere (except in other parts of the world). The configurative process, instinctive and free of purpose, breaks through in these people without any demonstrable external stimulus or direction – they know not what they do. Whatever may be said to limit the value of this insight, it is certain that nowhere else do we find the components of the configurative process, which are subconsciously present in every man, in such an unadulterated state.

If we succeeded in showing by means of our material that pictures which in many ways approached the quality of professional art grew out of these primarily subconscious components, these conclusions must follow: tradition and schooling can influence the configurative process only peripherally, by promoting, through praise and reproach, rules and systems. There is, however, a kind of intrinsic process; the preconditions for its development are present in every person. This assertion is supported by numerous experiences. We know today that most children possess an original configurative urge which develops freely in a suitable environment, but which disappears rapidly as the rationalism of schooling turns an instinctual, playful creature into a knowing and purposeful one. Experiences with primitives and with many dream experiences bear this out. As surely as configuration is an activity and itself has little to do with visions and fantasy, so does the ability to experience objective pictures in dreams and hypnotic hallucinations indicate an original

configurative power. We observe repeatedly, especially in psychotherapy, that under the right circumstances almost every person is capable of experiencing his conflicts in an extremely pregnant symbolic disguise. We must therefore conclude that an original configurative instinct intrinsic to all men has been buried by the development of civilization.

When the configurative instinct emerges spontaneously in mentally ill persons after years of hospitalization, the explanation, based on the foregoing, might be as follows: an ability common to all men which usually remains latent or withered is suddenly activated. Among the causes could be the inner development or change of the patient, his renunciation of the outside world, and his autistic concentration on his own person as well as the change in his milieu, especially his separation from the outside world with its innumerable small stimuli and his inactivity. If we assign major responsibility to the change in environment, other similar settings like convents and prisons should also facilitate liberation. It would also seem theoretically likely that introversion will produce the same effect. On the other hand, we could look for an explanation on quite a different basis. The patient would achieve a configurative power under the very specific effect of schizophrenia which is otherwise denied him, by having processes occur in his psyche which are normally limited to artists. Both explanations seem to us to interpret correctly a part of our observations, but the reliability of the latter could be established only when we know clearly which forms of experience are new to an artist in psychosis. Above all we would have to know whether perhaps something appearing quite normal to him would surprise others as totally alien.

Another group of problems is more a part of the sociology of configuration. What are the relationships between schizophrenic and decadent configuration? Such questions can be answered only when we can define the concepts of decadence or degeneration, however, which again presupposes a norm.<sup>46</sup> We believe that we should avoid any discussion of value judgments in an investigation which is purely psychological.

## V. *The Schizophrenic Outlook and Our Age*

We have had many occasions to emphasize the direct importance of schizophrenic art for our time. The relationship is very complex. The particularly close relationship of a large number of our pictures to contemporary art is obvious. Furthermore, experience shows that people of very different characters, ages, and occupations were powerfully and lastingly impressed by these pictures and were not infrequently compelled to ask themselves fundamental cultural and philosophical questions. As far as the pictures' relationship to contemporary art is concerned, we were able to observe a succession of reac-

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<sup>46</sup> Most recently we again notice attempts at a new construction of a concept of the human norm, in which creative configuration plays the most important role. See above all the strict and clear attempt of Kurt Hildebrandt in his book, *Norm und Entartung des Menschen*, Dresden, 1920. Gruhle discusses all sorts of psychic abnormalities purely psychologically in the volume entitled "Psychologie des Abnormen" of the *Handbuch der Vergleichenden Psychologie*, still in print and published by E. Reinhardt, Munich. For the nonpsychiatrist, for whom the well known *Allgemeine Psychopathologie* by Jaspers (2d ed., 1920) may perhaps seem to address itself too closely to psychiatric needs, Gruhle's work makes the whole subject accessible for the first time. Rich resources from all periods appear in Birnbaum, *Psychopathologische Dokumente*, Berlin, 1921. There are many sociological and art historical works to complement these psychopathologic studies, e.g., E. von Sydow, *Die Kultur der Dekadenz*, Dresden, 1921.

tions which clearly showed the influence of emotions or personal interest on every individual judgment. Whereas culturally conservative and historically oriented persons either did not react to the individuality of the pictures at all or tried to reinterpret fleeting impressions into cultural and political tendencies, all the observers who live with the problems of pictorial configuration or are closely involved with abnormal psychology responded eagerly to the strangest works. Some of the artists, among them conservatives and, on the other hand, extreme expressionists, gave themselves up to a calm study of the pictures' peculiarities, admired numerous pictures without stint, and dismissed others, without even considering dividing them up into those that are healthy and those that are sick. Others again, belonging to very different schools, renounced all the material as nonart, but nevertheless paid lively attention to all its nuances. A third group, finally, were shaken to their foundations and believed that they had found the original process of all configuration, pure inspiration, for which alone, after all, every artist thirsts. Some of them underwent a series of developmental crises from which in the end they found their way back to greater knowledge about themselves and their work.

Just as we refused to define the essence of schizophrenic configuration on the basis of superficial traits, so we decline to draw parallels between contemporary art and our pictures by comparing external characteristics. Such comparisons, not just by laymen but even by reputable psychiatrists, appear daily in the press and are vulgar and sensational. Aside from the fact that even if the reported parallels were provable they would serve only to arm the philistines with fresh platitudes, such comparisons are based on a great psychological and logical error: it is superficial and wrong to infer an equality of the underlying psychic conditions from external similarities. The conclusion that a painter is mentally ill because he paints like a given mental patient is no more intelligent or convincing than another; *viz.*, that Pechstein and Heckel are Africans from the Camerouns because they produce wooden figurines like those by Africans from the Camerouns. Anybody tending to such simpleminded conclusions does not deserve to be taken seriously. We used some examples to show that the pictures by our schizophrenics are reminiscent not only of primitive art but also of works from great cultures. Some of our works are so clearly artistic that many an average "healthy" work is left far behind. External qualities will therefore not throw light on undeniable and deep relationships. It would seem much more rewarding to turn our attention to the related traits in the general emotional attitude evinced by the most recent serious art. There we find indeed as a basic trait a renunciation of the outside world as commonly understood, as well as a logical devaluation of its surface luster on which all Western art has heretofore depended, and finally a decisive turn inward upon the self. We have used the very same phrases in our efforts to describe the outlook of schizophrenics.

The astonishing fact that the schizophrenic outlook and that displayed in recent art can be described only by the same words immediately obliges us to state the differences as well. And that is not hard. For the schizophrenic there is the fateful experience. The alienation from the world of appearances is imposed on him as a gruesome, inescapable lot against which he often struggles for some time until he submits and slowly begins to feel at home in his autistic world, which is enriched by his delusions. For the contemporary artist alienation from the once familiar and courted reality may also result from an overpowering experience, but at least it involves conscious and rational decisions. It occurs because of painful self-analysis and because the surmounted relationships to society become repulsive, and it is therefore often mixed with doubts, a bad conscience, and resentments. On the other hand, it has a clear purpose, at least theoretically. By

its nature the liberation from the compulsion of external appearances should be so complete that all configuration should deal only with pure psychic qualities. Its source should be a completely autonomous personality with ambitions of entering into a mystical union with the whole world.

The decline of the traditional outlook which gave rise to this extravagant, grandiose, often compulsively distorted attitude cannot be pursued here. In any case it is not simply a concern of expressionism, as shortsighted people still hope even today. On the contrary, expressionism is a symptom of the decline and an attempt to make the best of it. If we ignore the confusion of artistic programs and try to grasp the motivating idea which produces ever greater exaltations, we find the same longing for inspired creation reported in primitives and known from the greatest periods of culture. That brings us to the weakness of our time – its tragedy and grimness. What we seem to lack is just that primary experience which precedes all knowledge and which alone produces inspired art. Instead, after all our extravagant wishing, after all the determined triumphs over ancient errors, we finally end up with intellectual substitutes.

If we are correct, then the passionate emotions with which sensitive artists react to our pictures become completely understandable. These works really emerged from autonomous personalities who carried out the mission of an anonymous force, who were independent of external reality, indebted to no one, and sufficient solely unto themselves. The inborn primeval process of configuration ran its course far from the outside world, without plan but by necessity, like all natural processes. Men who like Tolstoy, the most venerable among those who despair of our civilization, are given to anarchistic conceptions of artistic creation because of their mystical leanings, become easily intoxicated by the qualities of primeval configuration. We cannot refrain from pointing out that the most recent artistic styles cannot simply be dismissed as the private project of a few people hungry for publicity, a harmless and comfortable but still widely popular opinion. Cultural values and developments cannot be taught to anyone who has not experienced them. Given the great speed with which cultural forces become history today, the unperceptive person accepts as historic fact what until yesterday he believed he could safely ignore as the phantasmagoria of isolated enthusiasts. If we carefully observe the arts today we find a number of tendencies active in all of them, the fine arts as well as all branches of literature, to which only a genuine schizophrenic could do justice. Mind you, we are far from trying to prove the presence of symptoms of mental illness in these arts, but we do find an instinctive affinity for nuances which are familiar to us in schizophrenics. That affinity explains the similarities of our pictures to modern art and their attractiveness. What we said of the decline of the traditional outlook among creative artists applies to all professions. Just as common is a craving for direct intuitive experience combined with a mystical self-deification and the concern with metaphysics, from the genuine philosophical to the sectarian and theosophical in which magic powers are again at work. We are even tempted to invoke our formulation for the overall attitude of schizophrenic configuration and to see in the age something of the tense, ambivalent hesitation immediately preceding decisions. The tendencies toward a schizophrenic outlook are in the main those, however, which two decades ago sought relief from the overpowering rationalism of the last generations in the expressive modes and outlook of children and primitives. Those men who believe they are being stifled by it are not the worst.

## *VI. Summary*

Briefly, here are the results of our investigation and the problems raised by it. Untrained mentally ill persons, especially schizophrenics, frequently compose pictures which have many of the qualities of serious art and in their details often show surprising similarities to the pictures of children and primitives, as well as to those of many different cultural periods. Their closest relationships, however, are with the art of our time because of the fact that contemporary art, in its search for intuition and inspiration, consciously strives after psychic attitudes which appear as a matter of course in schizophrenia. If our understanding of the schizophrenic condition is facilitated by an appraisal of the temper of our times, without any attempt at a cultural and biological evaluation, we may also, on the other hand, find our insights helpful in judging the times. We must avoid the fallacy of concluding, on the basis of superficial similarities, that there is a psychic equality, however. An objective and rewarding critique of both is possible only in the light of a biologically based norm and a penetrating analysis of all essential components.

We gained psychological and, indirectly, systematic knowledge about schizophrenia. With the aid of the pictures we found new insights into the psychic life of patients and we particularly saw the schizophrenic outlook embodied in various kinds of play in which individual symptoms also seemed frequently to be expressed. Our proof that a productive factor survives the general disintegration of a personality to gain form in configuration is very important. The extraordinary variety of the pictures does not permit us to establish just a few characteristics, and suggests that in schizophrenia, broadly conceived, very different conditions are loosely associated. A patient's personal touch is very obvious even in the last and final stage. The tendency to symbolic configuration always forces us to recognize the close relationships of schizophrenic psychic life on the one hand with dreams, and on the other with the outlook and thought patterns of primitives. The relationship with primitives is further confirmed by the noticeable similarities of many pictures. It offers new evidence in support of the detour, already frequently recommended, into ethno-psychology which may, through a critical evaluation of analogical phenomena, offer us insights into and solutions to many problems in psychopathology.

The methods we used do not lend themselves to explanations of the undeniably close formal relationships of pictures of such different origins. There is no answer to the profound question of how signs, symbols, and pictures originated, to what degree they are still extant, though hidden, in men of today, and why they emerge more easily from the changed outlook of the mentally ill – provided we can even maintain the assumption that the same process is active in all cases. We avoided speaking of psychogenetic remains, regression, and archaic thinking because these concepts did not seem to us to do the facts full justice, no matter how significant they may be. Perhaps the realistic natural-scientific mode of thought which is basic to such primarily causally directed attempts at explanation will be superseded by a method of observation in which the creative factors of psychic life will be given their just place.

We have only just prepared the ground for psychological studies in the narrower sense. They are directed first toward the establishment of a theory of the simplest expres-

sive movements and their results, next to the creation of symbols, and finally to the psychology of the primitive psychic life generally, its parallels in children and schizophrenics, and its rudiments in all cultures.

The differentiation of our pictures from those of the fine arts is possible today only because of an obsolete dogmatism. Otherwise there are no demarcation lines. Starting with the thesis that pictorial creative power is present in every person, we have to look on tradition and training as external cultural embellishments of the primary configurative process which under the right conditions can break forth in every person. This primeval process, which incorporates the subconscious components in an almost pure form, cannot be better observed in any pictures other than ours. We can show with the help of the comparative material that mental illness does not add new components to the artist. Only variations of the usual occur, and this fact allows us to isolate the essentials all the more convincingly. How far the theory of pictorial configuration will be advanced by an investigation of the validity of the assumptions governing our approach to the material remains to be seen. It is quite likely that the rewards would be greater than those already obtained from the art of children and primitives.

In all future research we must keep in mind the major problem which will continue to give it direction, that of the relationships between the outlook of creative and mentally ill persons, which of course can be defined only on the basis of a metaphysics of configuration. Recently the first steps have been taken in its formulation. Then, perhaps, our lame *ignoramus*, which did not trust itself to draw firm lines, will be replaced by a more confident, virile generation with an instinctively more certain *sic volumus* which will transcend our skeptical rationalism.